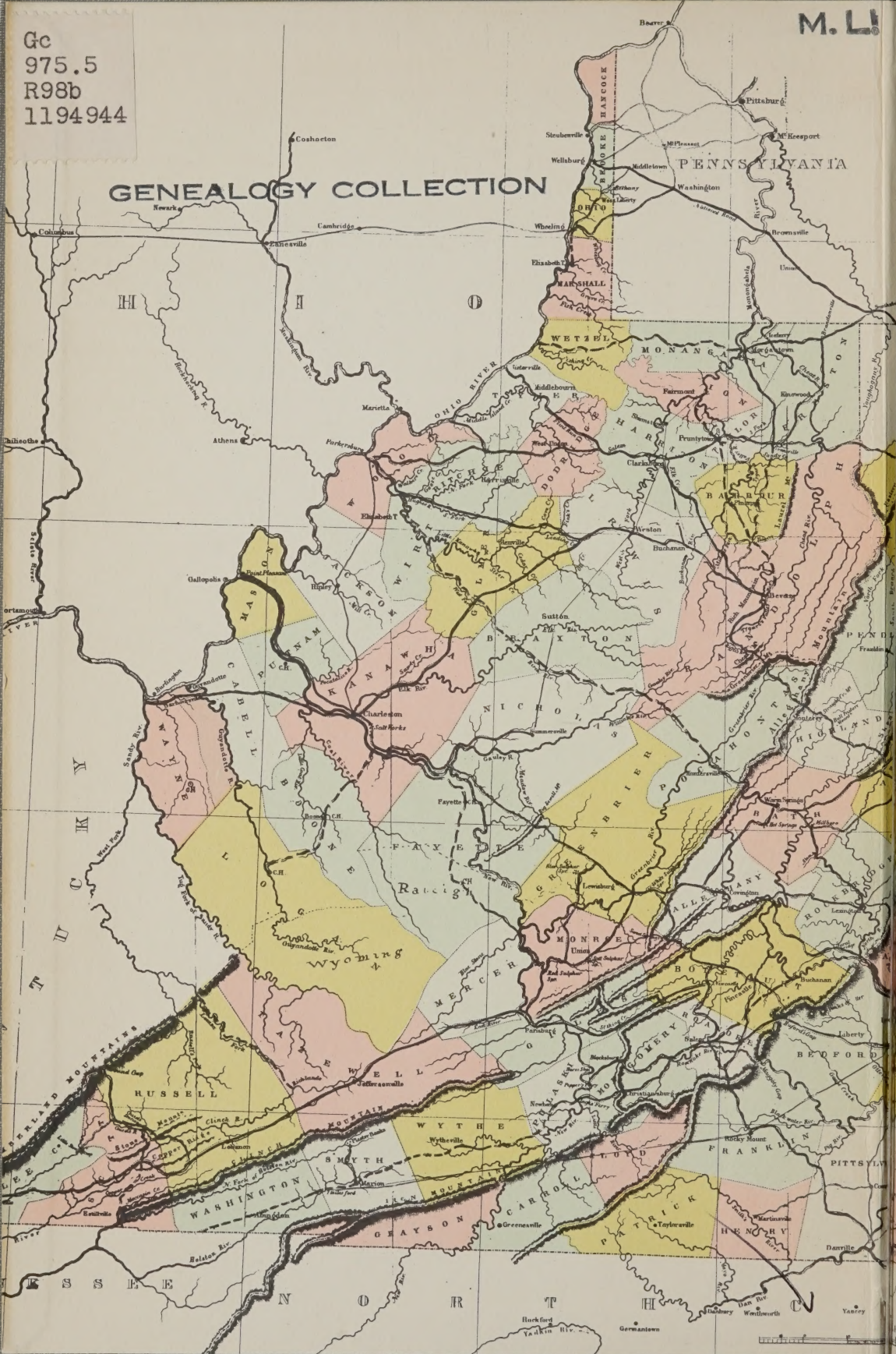




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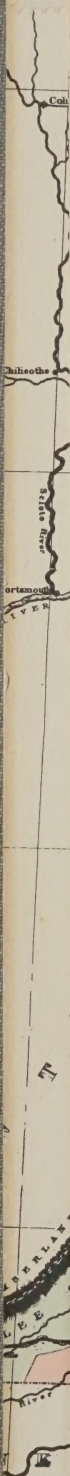
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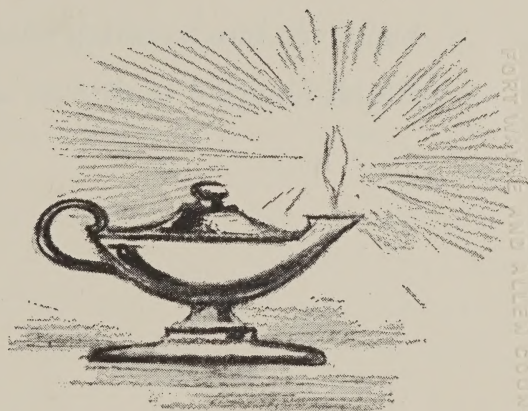
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THE BAPTISTS OF VIRGINIA

1699-1926



by

GARNETT RYLAND

The Virginia Baptist Board of Missions and Education
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA

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who gathered and cherished
the records of Virginia Baptists

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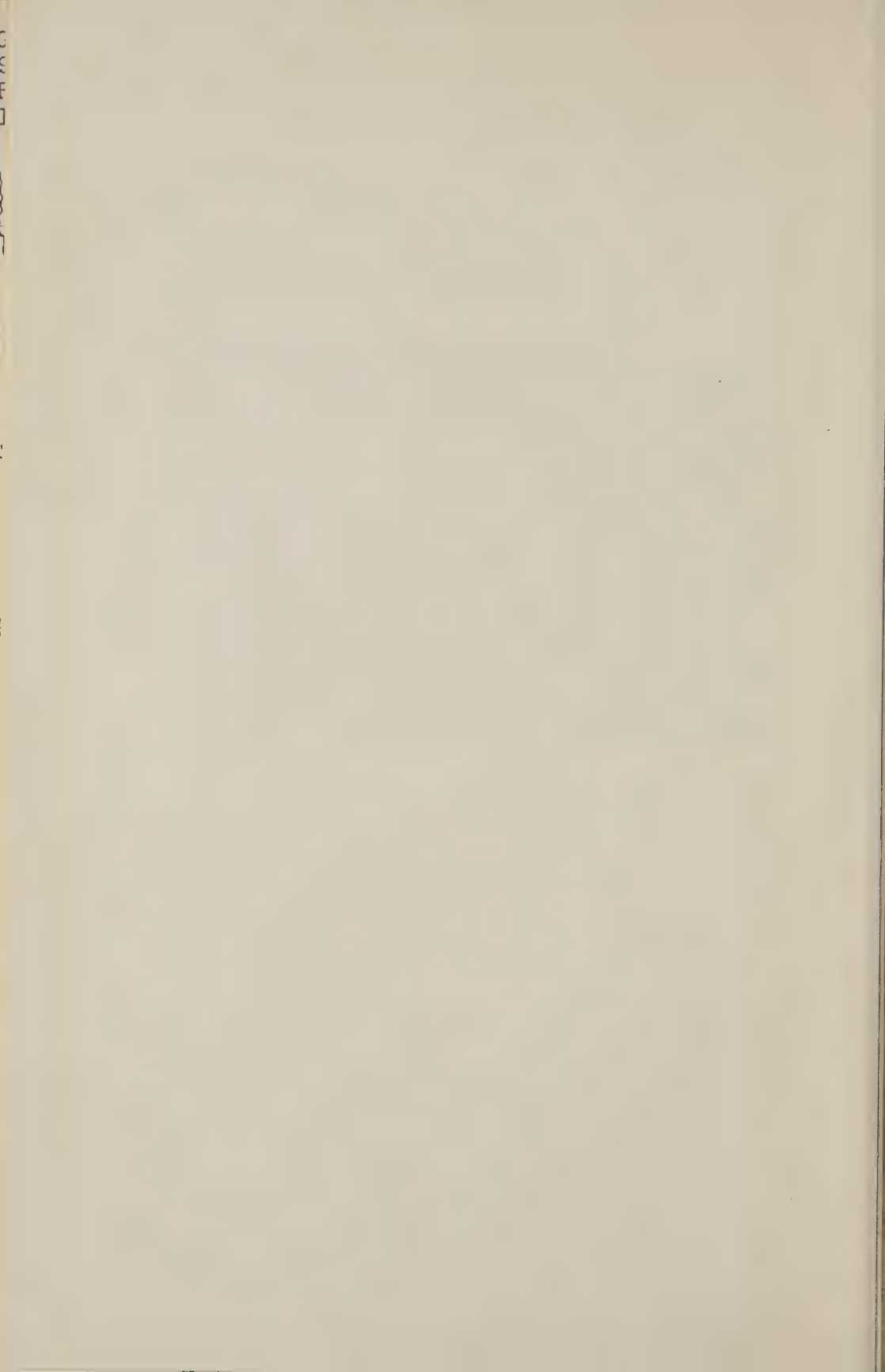
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THE General Committee of the Baptists in Virginia in 1788 appointed six of its members "to collect materials for compiling and publishing a history of the Baptists in Virginia."

The next year, John Williams, its moving spirit, wrote: "We desire every circumstance to be handed forth in as clear and conspicuous a point of view as possible, perfectly consistent with candor and truth."

This was accomplished by Robert Baylor Semple in his *History of the Rise and Progress of the Baptists in Virginia*, published in 1810, and from it the present account of the Baptists of Virginia has drawn freely.

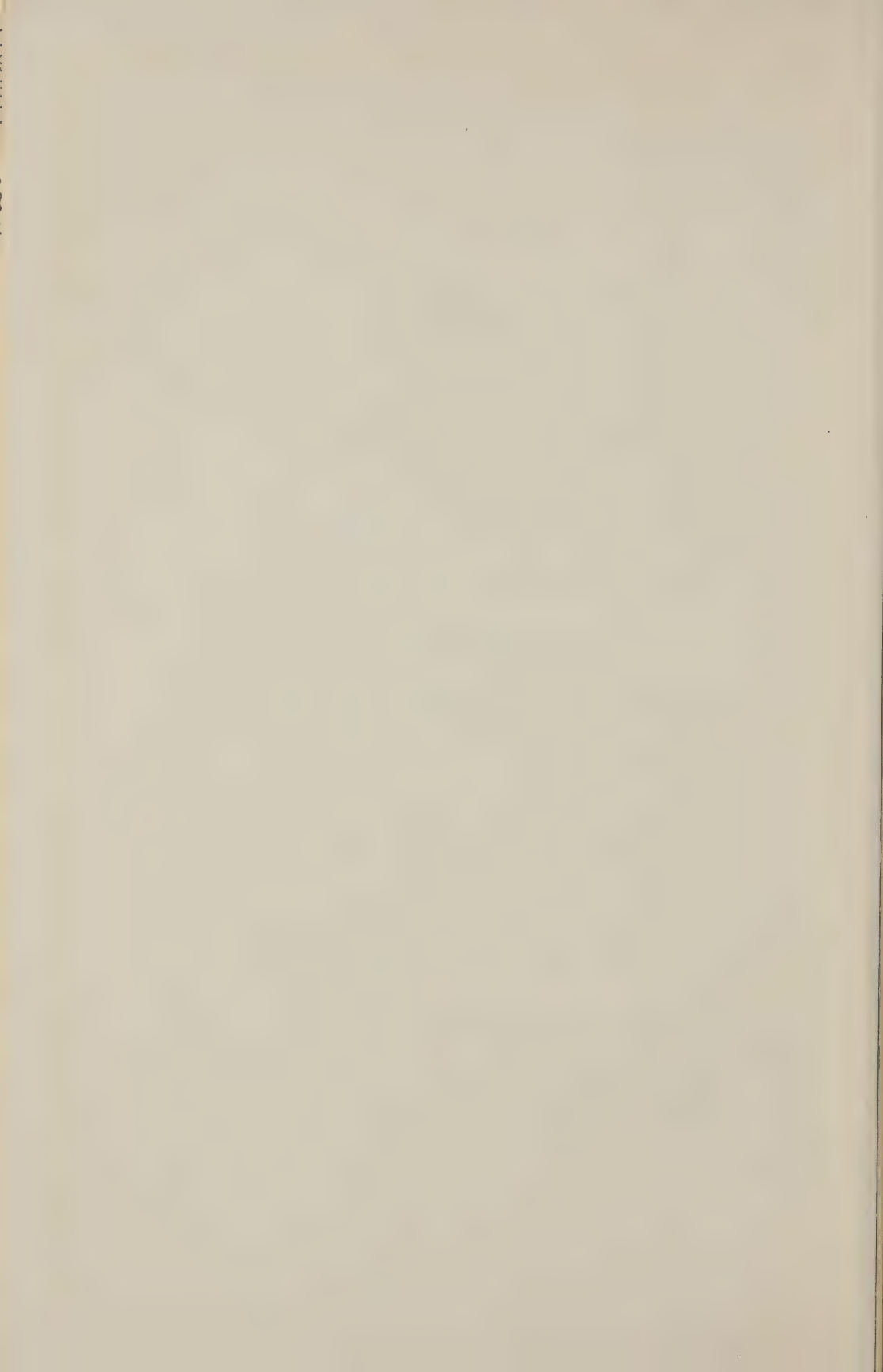
G. R.



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The General Baptists

1699 - 1756

THE first record of Baptists in Virginia is in the journal of Thomas Story, an English Quaker who visited Virginia at the close of the seventeenth century. He states that in January, 1699, "On the 23rd, being the First of the Week, we had a meeting at York City at the house of one Thos. Bonger, a Preacher among the General Baptists, and it was the first Meeting of our Friends that had been held there."¹

There is nothing that has been found about Bonger in the York County records or elsewhere. Sir William Berkeley, governor of Virginia, with short intermissions, from 1642 for thirty-five years, had enforced vigorously the intolerant laws in regard to religion in the effort to bring complete conformity to the Church of England and elimination of all dissenters by banishment from the Colony.²

But when Lord Culpeper was appointed governor in 1679, his instructions directed him "to permit a liberty of conscience to all persons except Papists, so they be content with a quiet, peaceable enjoyment of it, not giving offense or scandal to the government."³ These Baptists, among whom Bonger was a minister, were apparently so "quiet" that they escaped notice by the court and mention in the records. They escaped the attention, also, of the authors of *The Present State of Virginia*, written in 1697, which says, "The Number of Dissenters in that Country was very inconsiderable, there not being so many of

1. Story, 165.

2. Cooke, 182.

3. Neill, 396.

any Sort as to set up a Meeting House, except three or four Meetings of *Quakers* and one of *Presbyterians*.”⁴

In 1689 the Toleration Act was passed by the English Parliament as a concession to the Protestant Dissenters from the Church of England for their support in the Revolution of 1688 that brought William and Mary to the throne. While the Established Church was secured in its position and all Englishmen taxed for its support, dissenters, except Catholics and Unitarians, were permitted to worship in their own meeting houses, provided they were registered and the doors kept unlocked. Their ministers were licensed to preach in these meeting houses if they had taken the oaths of allegiance and supremacy, denied belief in transubstantiation and signed the Thirty-nine Articles except those referring to the constitution, forms and claims of the Church of England and, in the case of the Baptists, article 27, on infant baptism.⁵ The Toleration Act was not incorporated in the laws of Virginia until 1699 and then “by a mere general reference.”⁶ A subsequent amendment by Parliament, liberalizing the licensing of dissenters’ meeting houses, never received legal recognition in the Colony.

“To Go to Virginia”

On May 19, 1714, the General Assembly of the General Baptists of England, in session in London, undertook to stir up the churches “for Some Assistance for Robt. Norden and Thos. White who are Appointed and Approved by this Assembly to go to Virginia to propagate the Gospel of truth.”⁷ A committee was appointed to “press a Speedy Return of the Money On the

4. Hartwell, Blair and Chilton, 65.

5. Leland, 106.

6. Hening III, 171.

7. *Minutes of the General Assembly of the General Baptist Churches In England*, edited by W. T. Whitley, I, 125. The General Baptists described themselves as “Baptised Believers who hold the Doctrine of Universal Redemption thro’ our Lord Jesus Christ.” (I, 132.)

Virginia Acct.” and it was “Agreed the persons appointed to go to Virginia with all Convenient Speed.”⁸

The men thus chosen were of some note among their brethren. Robert Norden appears in the General Assembly in 1704 as an Elder from Warbleton in Sussex. At this Assembly he was urged to accept the position of “Messenger” in the General Baptist body of England — a position of itinerant preaching and general supervision of very great importance, to which none but the most trusted brethren were elected. Norden was unwilling to accept the responsibility of the position, and his brethren were unable to persuade him to accede to their desires. Thomas White of Kent first appeared in the minutes of the General Assembly in 1711 when he was a “representative,” that is, an unordained member. In 1714 he appears as a “Messenger,” the highest position his brethren could give.⁹

On the voyage across the Atlantic, Thomas White died. Norden reached Virginia and the records of Prince George County show that on June 14, 1715, “Robert Norden, an Annabaptist¹⁰ preacher appears in Court and takes the Oaths and Subscribes the Declarations mentioned in the Act of Parliament of the 1st of William and Mary.”¹¹ On the same day the Court records that “Matthew Marks having petitioned this court that his house be entered a publick meeting house for those persons called Annabaptists, it’s Ordered the same be done immediately.” At the next session of the Court, July 12,

-
8. Whitley, I, 125. A member of this committee was James Richardson, who “in his lifetime had been most earnest in promoting a mission to Virginia, for which four Messengers were chosen, and a subscription of 200 pounds was asked.” (I, XXX.)
9. Whitley, I, 91, 94, 123. In the list of messengers, “when they emerge and disappear,” is “1715.—William Wood of Lewes, for Virginia. He returned, settled in Ditchling, died before 1728.” (I, XXXIV.) There is nothing else given about him.
10. The term “Anabaptist” was applied to those who rejected infant baptism and practiced the baptism of believers only. They repudiated the charge that they practiced rebaptism since they held that where there had been no personal faith there had been no baptism.
11. Order Book, 1714-1720, p. 20. The oath and the declaration are given in Deed Book, No. 1, p. 58. Urner, 98.

1715, "On motion of Nicholas Robertson it's Ordered that his house be recorded a publick meeting house for the Sext of Annabaptists."¹²

The will of Matthew Marks, made in August and recorded in October, 1719¹³ shows that his house in Martins Brandon Parish was still a meeting place for the Baptists and that Norden made it his home. It stated:

I give and bequeath to Edward Marks, the son of Edward Marks, to [two] hundred acres of land more or less, joining to Wards Creek, to him and his heirs Lawfully begotten, to be by him enjoyed at the age of One and twenty years, he not prohibiting the meetings there settled.

I give to my daughter to [two] beds in the fire room, one for her forth with, and the other to remain for the use of Robert Norden the time of his tarrying in Virginia. 'tis my Will Robert Norden have the plantation I live in, till Edward Marks comes of age, with the land belonging to it.

Norden was named as executor and presented the will in court.

At the meeting of the General Assembly of the General Baptists of England in 1724¹⁴ it was "Agreed that the Affair of Virginia be referred to the next Assembly." This met in May, 1725 and agreed that:

Bror. Robert Norden being sent for Home from Virginia if he be Disposed to Returne be referred to two brethren to act as they shall judge necessary and to call assistance as they may think proper.¹⁵

12. Order Book, 20, 25. Urner, 99. The earliest known mention of Matthew Marks is his patent in 1690 for 556 acres on Ward's Run in Martins Brandon Parish (Virginia Patent Book No. 8, p. 77). In 1691 the Order Book of Charles City County (from which Prince George was formed in 1703) records that Matthew Marks was summoned for not attending the parish church. In 1704 his holdings were over 1,500 acres (Prince George Quit Rent Rolls, in *Virginia Magazine*, Vol. 28, p. 334). Nicholas Robertson recorded his "mark for cattle" in Charles City County in 1687. A Deed by him in 1718 shows that he lived in Bristol Parish. The homes of Marks and Robertson were in different parts of the county.

13. Old Will Book, 352. Urner, 99.

14. Whitley, I, 141.

15. Whitley, I, 146.

But Norden did not live to return to England, for "An Inventory And Appraisement of the Estate of Robert Norden, Dec'd, October the 7th day, 1726," is on record in Prince George County.¹⁶ Richard Jones was administrator and the value of Norden's property is put at 20 pounds and 10 shillings. In agreement with these records is a note by Isaac Backus (1724-1806):

A letter is now before me, written from Virginia, to Elder Eyers of Newport,¹⁷ January 28th, 1742, by John Hamerstley; where it appears, that in consequence of letters from Virginia, Robert Nordin and Thomas White were ordained in London, in May 1714; and soon sailed for Virginia. But White died by the way, and Nordin arrived in Virginia and gathered a Baptist church in Prince George county; and held meetings there and in other places, until he died, December 1st, 1725, in a good old age. And on April 30th, 1727, the church ordained Richard Jones their elder, who continued to be their minister in 1742, the church had about forty members.¹⁸

John Hamersley was a physician whose name occurs frequently in the Prince George court records in relations of trust and public service. The name is one of distinction in the prior history of the English Baptists. On this letter by Hamersley is based the statement by Backus:

The first Baptist Church in Virginia was formed in Prince George county, in 1714, by Robert Norden, who then came from England, and was their pastor till he died in 1725. In 1727, Mr. Richard Jones was ordained their pastor; and in 1742 they had about forty members, as one of them wrote to Newport, which letter I have. About the same time, a man went from thence and formed a church on the sea-coasts of North Carolina. But these all held to general redemption, and their churches are since dissolved.¹⁹

Of the later history of this church in Prince George there is no trace.

16. Old Will Book, 940.

17. Rhode Island.

18. "Mr. Backus farther notes, 'William Sojourner went from that church, and gathered a church in North Carolina, about 1740.'" (Semple, 344, 345.)

19. Backus (1839), 229.

Churches in Isle of Wight and Surry

What were the "other places" where Norden held meetings? Alexander Forbes, a clergyman of the Church of England, wrote to the Bishop of London from the Upper Parish of the Isle of Wight County in Virginia on July 21, 1724: "We have Sundry Dissenters as Anabaptists and Quakers."²⁰

Paul Palmer, a minister of the General Baptists, wrote from North Carolina to Elder John Comer of Newport, Rhode Island, in 1729:

There is a comely little church in the Isle of Wight county, of about thirty or forty members, the Elder of which is one Richard Jones, a very sensible old gentleman, whom I have great love for. We see each other at every Yearly Meeting, and sometimes more often. There is another church in Surry county, and where my brother Jones lives, I suppose of about thirty more.²¹

Morgan Edwards of Philadelphia, as he passed through Virginia on his travels southward in 1771-2, visiting the churches as a missionary evangelist, gathered his "Materials towards a History of the Baptists in the Province of Virginia."²²

20. Ingram, 204. Meade had before him a letter from Alexander Forbes to the Bishop of London in 1724 and a second letter. "He complains much of the Quakers who annoyed him not a little, somewhat of the Anabaptists who were then finding their way into Virginia." (Meade, I, 301-2.)

21. Benedict (1813), II, 24.

22. Morgan Edwards (1722-1795), a native of Wales, came to America in 1761 at the call of the Baptist church of Philadelphia to be its pastor. He was the principal mover in establishing Rhode Island College (since 1804, Brown University). In 1770 he resigned his pastorate and spent two years traveling through the colonies gathering information for a history of the Baptists of America. This he set down in note books, most of which, including a part of that on Virginia, are in the library of the American Baptist Historical Society at Chester, Pennsylvania. Edwards worked these notes up into volumes of "Materials" towards the history of each colony. The manuscript for Virginia is in the possession of Allester G. Furman of Greenville, South Carolina. Its title page reads:

Materials towards A History of the Baptists in the province of Virginia. Vol. III. By Morgan Edwards A. M. and fellow of Rhode Island College. Lo a people that dwell alone and shall not be reckoned among the nations. Num. XXIII, 9. M. D. CCLXXII.

In his preface he wrote:

Whether any of the original settlers of Virginia were Baptists cannot be ascertained at this distance of time. The first society of them was founded at Burley in Isle of Wight County (about the year 1727), by immigrants from England who had as their minister Rev. Richard Nordin; he soon returned and was succeeded by messrs. Casper Mintz and Richard Jones.²³

This society is now extinct, partly by sickness, and partly by removals of families from hence to North Carolina where they gained many proselytes and in 10 years time became 16 churches. They were all General Baptists but have since for the most part embraced the Calvinistic sentiments. The church of Burley was in being about 16 years ago, as appears by the following letter addressed to the association of Philadelphia. "The church of Jesus Christ in Isle-of-Wight county, holding adult baptism, &c. to the Reverend and General Assembly or Association at Philadelphia, sends greeting. We the above mentioned church confess ourselves to be under clouds of darkness, concerning the faith of Jesus Christ, not knowing whether we are on the right foundation, and the church much unsettled; wherefore, we desire alliance with you, and that you will be pleased to send us helps, to settle the church, and rectify what may be wrong; and subscribe ourselves your loving brethren in Christ, Casper Mintz, Richard Jones, Randal Allen, Joseph Mattgum, Christopher Atkinson, Benjamin Atkinson, David Atkinson, Thomas Cafer, Samuel Jones, William Jordan, John Allen, John Powell, Joseph Atkinson.—Dec. 27, 1756."

Their confusion was over the Arminian and the Calvinistic systems of theology. They were originally General Baptists, Arminian in theology, believing in a "General Atonement," offered to all men alike, the salvation of all infants dying in infancy, and the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Spirit after baptism.²⁴ For a time it had seemed as if this type of Baptist would become predominant in both England and

23. This statement, with errors characteristic of a tradition, gathered by Edwards after years had passed, was the basis for John Leland's account (Semple, 345). Semple and Benedict tried to combine Backus' and Edwards' statements. Knight in 1827 adds statements for which he gives no authority.

24. McGlothlin 109-122. Whitley, I, 10-12.

America. They showed much more zeal and vigor in the early days of their history than did the Calvinistic Regular Baptists who held to a "Particular Atonement" for the elect only. But about the middle of the 18th century the tide turned in favor of a milder Calvinism of the Whitefield type. It was probably due to his influence as well as to that of the Philadelphia and Charleston Regular Baptist Associations that these brethren fell into confusion. This letter to the Philadelphia Association is the last glimpse we get of them in the capacity of a church.

Isaac Backus wrote in his diary of a trip through Virginia in 1789:

I came through part of Surry and Southampton Counties to Elder Barrow's meeting-house in Isle of Wight County, to an association of churches partly of Virginia and partly of North Carolina. This association was held amongst the small remains of an Arminian Baptist church which was gathered by Elder Norden who came from London, in 1714. They were reduced almost to nothing when Elder Glamore and others came and preached sovereign grace among them and a great reformation has taken place in these parts.²⁵

John Meglamre (1730-99) planted Mill Swamp, constituted in 1774²⁶ in Isle of Wight County with David Barrow, pastor. Semple wrote in 1810, "Within the limits of this church there had been for many years some Freewill Baptists, as they were termed."²⁷

Five of the eight surnames of the signers of the letter to the Philadelphia Association in 1756 appear among the earliest members of Mill Swamp. The land for its meeting house was deeded in 1775 by Thomas Cofer.²⁸

25. *Backus* by Hovey, 273.

26. Minute Book of Mill Swamp Church.

27. Semple, 359.

28. Deans, 14, 21.

The Regulars

1743 - 1776

IN 1743 Edward Hayes and Thomas Yates, members of the General Baptist church at Chestnut Ridge in Maryland, with a company, followed the "Great Wagon Road" that ran west from Baltimore, and settled on Mill Creek, a tributary of the Opequon, in what was then Frederick County, Virginia, and is now Berkeley County, West Virginia. Their minister, Henry Loveall, soon followed them. His preaching was attended with success and in a short time he baptized fifteen persons.¹ The church that he organized, Mill Creek (sometimes called Opekon),² was of the General Baptist order, but after he had gone off, following his exclusion from the church for licentiousness, they found themselves destitute and without fellowship and applied for advice and assistance to the Philadelphia Association. Benjamin Miller "had formerly visited these people in some of his journeys and God had blessed his labours by the conversion of several souls." So the Association at its meeting in 1752 sent Miller, accompanied by Mr. Sutton from Old Town.³

1. Semple, 288. Benedict, II, 14.

2. The title to the original site of the meeting house of Mill Creek Church, on the stream of that name, in Gerrardstown, West Virginia, from which went out the first currents of permanent Baptist influence in the Virginias, and which was associated with the bodily presence of more of the early Baptist leaders than any other spot, was vested by the district court in 1948 in the trustees of the First Baptist Church of Martinsburg, West Virginia. In the early 1800s the church moved its place of meeting to the highway between Martinsburg and Charles Town. In 1835 it aligned itself with the opposition to "the benevolent institutions of the day" and has since ceased to exist. (Mill Creek Minute Book. Gordon, 140-151.)

3. Gano, 40. Miller was pastor at Scotch Plains, New Jersey (Philadelphia Association Minutes). Isaac Sutton was ruling elder of Mill Creek in 1757, a delegate from Mill Creek to the Kettocton Association in 1776 (Semple, 300) and pastor of Great Bethel in 1772 (Fristoe, 10).

At the same session in 1752, the Association had received an application from a church at Ketocton in Virginia, which had been constituted in 1751 by John Thomas and "had no ministerial assistance and which wanted the ordinances administered." Thomas was sent to them and with him went young John Gano (1727-1804).⁴ The four men traveled together to the Potomac, where they separated to discharge their respective missions and joined company again at "Opekon" (Mill Creek). They examined the church there, found it was not "regular" (i.e., Calvinistic), and proceeded to organize a new church on the Philadelphia pattern "sifting out the chaff and retaining the supposed good grain."⁵

Of all the old members that offered only three were found qualified for membership. These were constituted a church.⁶ Six others were baptized and joined with them. Gano says:

After the meeting ended a number of old members went aside and sent for me. They expressed their deplorable estate, and asked me if I would meet with them that evening and try to instruct them. They were afraid the ministers blamed them. They had been misled but it was not their fault, and they hoped I would pity them. I told them that I would with all my heart, and endeavored to remove their suspicion of the ministers. . . . They afterwards professed and became zealous members, and remained so, I believe, until their deaths.⁷

Samuel Heaton became the first pastor of the reconstituted church in 1752 and extended his activities to Konolowa in what is now Fulton County, Pennsylvania, where he formed a branch of Mill Creek.⁸ He was the first ordained Baptist minister to preach to the community on Smith's Creek.⁹

4. Gano, 40. Ketocton (sometimes called "Blue Ridge") had been constituted with eleven members (Philadelphia Minutes, 93). These were the "people in Fairfax County, Virginia" to whom a letter was written in behalf of the Association in 1750 (Philadelphia Minutes, 65). Loudoun County was formed from Fairfax in 1757.

5. Semple, 289.

6. Philadelphia Minutes, 93.

7. Gano, 49.

8. "In 1751 Mr. Samuel Heaton was admitted to Holy Orders and then went the next year, 1752, to Millcreek in Virginia." (Edwards, *Jersey*, 94.)

9. Smith's Creek Minute Book, Preface.

The Philadelphia Association at its meeting in October, 1754, "concluded to receive the church of Kettocton, and the church of Opekon, in Virginia, into fellowship."¹⁰ John Gano was sent in reply to requests from the former "for a person to administer the ordinance," and from Opekon (Mill Creek) for assistance in settling "some difficulty between the church and their minister." After it "appeared amicably adjusted and the wound healed," Gano went on to Kettocton.¹¹ In response to a pressing request he visited Samuel Newman¹² on Smith's Creek, then made a prolonged trip through the Carolinas, and in the spring of 1755 returned north by way of Kettocton where he spent some time.¹³

Daniel Marshall (1706-1784) under the influence of Whitefield's preaching had gone as a lay missionary to the Indians and had been driven into Pennsylvania by the approaching French and Indian War. In 1754 he came to Mill Creek. Here he and Mrs. Marshall were baptized by Samuel Heaton and he was licensed "to the unrestrained exercise of his gifts."¹⁴ The group, already very zealous, had much preaching and were remarkably warm in their religious exercises.

They went to such lengths that some of the more cold hearted lodged a complaint with the Philadelphia Association. Miller was sent to see what was the matter. When he came he was highly delighted with the exercises, joined in them cordially, and said if he had such warm hearted Christians in his church he would not take gold for them. He charged those who had complained rather to nourish than complain of such gifts. The work of God revived among them and considerable additions were made to the church.¹⁵

10. Philadelphia Minutes, 71, 72, 93.

11. Gano, 55-7.

12. "Samuel Newman and his wife, members of Montgomery Church in the county of Philadelphia, were the first members of any Baptist Church that settled here." Smith's Creek Minute Book, Preface.

13. Gano, 77.

14. Semple, 370.

15. Semple, 289.

Heaton had given up the pastorate of Mill Creek before the year 1754 was over and moved to Konolowa. To succeed him the Philadelphia Association in 1755 authorized the ordination of John Garrard at Mill Creek by Peter Peterson VanHorn of Pennepek, New Jersey, and Benjamin Miller, who were on their way to straighten out the theological views of the General Baptists in eastern North Carolina.¹⁶ Garrard, who had come from Pennsylvania, was pastor for thirty-two years until his death in 1787.¹⁷ Ireland said of him, "He feared God, but he feared not the face of man, and could stand up in the cause of his Master, support and defend his truths in the face of any audience."¹⁸

Braddock's defeat in 1755 was followed by incursions of the Indians on the unprotected frontier. Pastor and people moved across the Blue Ridge into the bounds of the church at Ketoc-ton and Garrard became pastor of the combined churches. When the fugitives returned to Mill Creek in 1757,¹⁹ John Marks, who had come from Montgomery, Pennsylvania, became pastor of Ketoc-ton until his death in 1788.²⁰

Smith's Creek

Beginning with Samuel Newman and wife, several members of Baptist churches in Pennsylvania settled on Smith's Creek and Lynville's Creek, tributaries of "North River" (North Fork of the Shenandoah) in that part of Frederick County which is now Shenandoah. For eleven years they were visited occasionally by Samuel Heaton, Benjamin Griffith,²¹ John Gano and John Alderson. In the spring of 1756 Alderson, with his wife, moved to the locality from New Britain, Pennsylvania. In

16. Philadelphia Minutes, 73. Burkitt and Read, 29.

17. Mill Creek Minute Book.

18. Ireland, 143.

19. Mill Creek Minute Book begins on their return.

20. Semple, 304. His grave stone in the Ketoc-ton church yard is inscribed, "The Rev. John Marks, Dec'd the 3d Day of March 1788. Aged 72 years."

21. Griffith was pastor of Montgomery, Pennsylvania (Philadelphia Minutes, 20).

August of that year he organized the Smith's Creek Church with eleven members. Samuel Newman was elected to the offices of deacon and clerk and Alderson was called to become its pastor from its constitution until he moved to Botetourt County in 1777.²²

In October, 1756, at a general meeting of Mill Creek, Kettocton and Smith's Creek, these three "congregational churches of Christ, baptized on personal Profession of Faith," agreed to hold communion and fellowship together each year. The first meeting was held at Smith's Creek in June, 1757. "The Solemn Public Worship of God" was conducted for three days by John Alderson and John Garrard. The next yearly meeting was prevented by the Indian incursions brought on by the French and Indian War, which forced the whole Smith's Creek neighborhood to go into the forts or over the mountains.²³ The capture of Quebec permitted the church to meet again in the fall of 1759. But "by reason of the Length of Way, the Difficulty of Winter, the troubles of removing back from our Flights, caused by the Enemy, and the great Affliction of the Small-Pox Raging in the Land" normal church life was not resumed until the spring of 1761.²⁴

In August, 1762, a "great congregation, awed with a profound silence, behaved with Reverence and the Supper was celebrated with its usual Solemnity."²⁵ In October, 1762 John

22. Smith's Creek Minute Book. Semple, 290. In June, 1756, Alderson was licensed by the Frederick County Court as a "dissenting minister to attend meeting houses on the No. River of Shenando and Lennell's Creek." (Order Book, No. 7, p. 67). The Lynville's Creek meeting house was an "arm" of Smith's Creek.

23. Smith's Creek Minute Book. Semple, 191-2. The peace of the Church and of the neighborhood had been disturbed by "Favourers of that Scriptureless practice, Infant Sprinkling," who called Alexander Miller (a Presbyterian minister) to their assistance. "Miller and a rude assembly with him in a disorderly manner" opened the Baptist meeting house, assumed the pulpit and "with opprobrious speeches" slandered pastor and deacon and "occasioned animosities in the neighborhood." This was on Wednesday, September 21, 1757. The Wednesday following "this riotous action" "the heathen" fell on the settlements—"a just retaliation for such unheard of proceedings," says the chronicler in the Minute Book.

24. Smith's Creek Minute Book.

25. Smith's Creek Minute Book.

Alderson was sent by the Smith's Creek Church to the Philadelphia Association, which at that meeting admitted the church as the third and last body in Virginia to be taken into its membership. The church then had thirty members.²⁶ In 1763 the church was scattered again by the Indians but the defeat of Pontiac the next year brought relief. In 1765 it sent Alderson with a query to the Philadelphia Association: "Whether it be proper to receive a person into communion who had been baptized by immersion by a minister of the church of England, if no other objection could be made?" The Association answered: "Yea, if he had been baptized on a profession of faith and repentance."²⁷

The Smith's Creek Minute Book records that at its meeting in August, 1765, "there was admitted into transient communion a Person of Quality viz. Silas Hart by Name." In May, 1766, he was received into full communion by a letter from Pennepek Church in Pennsylvania. Hart was sheriff of Augusta County in 1764 and sheriff and senior justice of Rockingham after it was established from Augusta in 1778.²⁸ When he died in 1795 he left to the Philadelphia Association property sufficient to yield an annuity of fifty pounds to be applied to the education of young preachers.²⁹

Another valuable addition was Nicholas Fain, who was "received into transient communion" in April, 1766. He was the "N. F." who had so strong an influence on James Ireland.³⁰

The Yearly Meeting, which had been resumed, was held in rotation at the meeting houses of the three churches, with preaching for several days, and it "greatly accelerated the spread of the Gospel."³¹

26. Philadelphia Minutes, 86. Smith's Creek Minute Book, August, 1762.

27. Minute Book, August, 1765. Philadelphia Minutes, 95.

28. Waddell, *Augusta County*. Wayland, *Rockingham County*.

29. Semple, 192-3. He was brother of Oliver Hart, A. M. (1723-95), pastor of the Baptist churches in Charleston, South Carolina, and Hopewell, New Jersey.

30. Ireland, 45-6, 52.

31. Semple, 291.

David Thomas and Broad Run

In 1760 David Thomas (1732-1801)³² came to Mill Creek Church from Pennsylvania on "a ministerial visit." A short time before this Peter Cornwell, who lived on Broad Run in Fauquier County, had become concerned about his spiritual welfare and had found help in a printed sermon by Whitefield. When he heard of the group in Frederick County he rode with a companion sixty miles through rough country to Mill Creek and for the first time heard the Gospel preached. Edmond Hays,³³ member of Mill Creek, helped him to find "how a weary and heavy laden sinner might have rest," and engaged so much of Cornwell's affection that he "induced Mr. Hays to remove and settle near him." "Neighbors came to see them, to whom they related what God did for their souls, exhorted, prayed, read the Bible and other good books." "Having an heart given him to love God and to love the children of God," Cornwell's "manner of life procured to him the name of Saint Peter."³⁴ A little meeting house was built and on his second trip to Mill Creek, when he related his experience, he was baptized. Cornwell met Thomas and invited him to preach at Broad Run. Thomas accepted and met with so much success that he became a resident there. In 1762 the Broad Run Church was constituted by David Thomas and John Marks with ten members who had belonged to Mill Creek. Thomas was received by letter from the church at Vincent, Pennsylvania,³⁵ and after submitting a "certificate of ordination and

32. Benedict, II, 26, 29, confuses David with John Thomas.

33. Benedict, II, 30, says that Hays was the same man who removed from Maryland to Virginia in 1743. But there is no other authority for this. In both Mill Creek and Ketocton minute books his first name is given as Edmond while the earlier Hays is called Edward by both Morgan Edwards and Semple.

34. Fristoe, 98. His former home continues to be called "Saint Hill." It is about eight miles from Warrenton on the right of the road from New Baltimore to Beverley's Mill and in 1946 was owned by Miss Eliza Dulaney.

35. Broad Run Minute Book.

good morals" from the Philadelphia Association,³⁶ was made pastor. The next day twenty-three were received by baptism and Broad Run under Thomas's leadership became a center of evangelism.

Semple says that David Thomas "was indeed a burning and a shining light." "Having by nature a strong and vigorous mind, he had devoted his attention with diligence to the acquirement of a classical education."³⁷ Thomas was a graduate of Hopewell Academy, Isaac Eaton's noted school in New Jersey, and was awarded the degree of Master of Arts by Rhode Island College. Fristoe speaks of his "fruitful mind, improved by close study and aided by supernatural influence so that the saints were fed with marrow and fatness and the divine law exhibited to the arousing of many a sinner."³⁸ William Wirt describes the deep impression on him of preaching by Thomas ("a most learned man") in Seneca, Maryland, in Wirt's youth in 1790.³⁹ "Besides the endowments of his mind," says Semple, "he had a melodious and piercing voice, pathetic address, expressive action, and above all, a heart filled with the love of God and sympathy for his fellow men whom he saw overwhelmed in sin and misery." "Thomas drew the attention of the people for many miles around" and they came long distances to hear him.

About this time "there were multiplied instances of persons who had never heard anything like evangelical preaching, that were brought through divine grace to see and feel the want of vital goodness. Many of these, when they would hear of Mr. Thomas and other Baptist preachers, would travel to hear them and invite them to come and preach in their neighborhoods."⁴⁰

One of them was Allen Wyley of Culpeper County, who "not knowing any spiritual preacher had sometimes gathered

36. Philadelphia Minutes, 86.

37. Semple, 292.

38. Fristoe, 7.

39. Kennedy, II, 386.

40. Semple, 293.

his neighbors and read the scriptures and exhorted them to repentance." Learning of Thomas, he with some of his neighbors in 1763 traveled to Fauquier to hear him. Wyley invited him to come to Culpeper and to preach in his home. Thomas "came but the opposition from the wicked was so great that he could not preach." He went into Orange County where he preached "to some purpose."⁴¹ Nathaniel Saunders (1734-1808) was among the first seals of his ministry, and was added to Broad Run by baptism as were many others.⁴² This was the beginning of thirty years of preaching tours through Northern Virginia by Thomas, sometimes with John Garrard, that were followed by many conversions, the organization of churches and the setting apart of young pastors for them.

The Kettocton Association

At its meeting in October, 1765, the Philadelphia Association "agreed that the churches in Virginia have our leave to form themselves into an association, provided they go on the same plan and hold union with us."⁴³ On August 19, 1766, John Marks and John Lloyd, delegates from Kettocton, John Garrard and Isaac Sutton from Mill Creek and John Alderson from Smith's Creek, the three churches that had belonged to the Philadelphia Association, with David Thomas and Joseph Metcalf from Broad Run, met at the Kettocton meeting house and organized an association to which they gave its name. The number belonging to the four churches was 142.⁴⁴ The meetings of the body were held in August each year. Thursday and Friday were given to reading letters from the churches, discussing and answering their queries on points of doctrine and dis-

41. Semple, 293.

42. Broad Run Minute Book, July 10, 1763. Semple, 177.

43. Philadelphia Minutes, 95.

44. Fristoe, 7. The Philadelphia Minutes for 1765 give Kettocton 33 members, Mill Creek, 70, and Smith's Creek, 36. Broad Run Minute Book lists 86 added by baptism to August 11, 1765.

cipline, preparing a "Circular Letter" to the churches on a subject of importance, maintaining correspondence with similar bodies of like faith and attending to matters of organization and the common welfare of the churches. Saturday and Sunday were generally devoted to preaching to the many thousands who frequently attended.⁴⁵ The Yearly Meetings in June continued to be given altogether to preaching, as were "occasional meetings." Religious literature was scant; there were few Bibles and fewer catechisms and hymn books. Schools were far between and illiteracy widespread. The pulpit was almost the only source of religious instruction for the people.

Churches and Pastors

Chappawamsic in Stafford was constituted in 1766 by David Thomas and Marks with fifty-five members from Broad Run.⁴⁶ It had meeting houses also for its "arms" which became later independent churches—Potomac (Hartwood) in Stafford in 1771, Brent Town in Fauquier in 1773, and Occoquon in Prince William in 1776. From Chappawamsic under Thomas' ministry came the young preachers, Daniel Fristoe (1739-83), William Fristoe (1748-1828) and Jeremiah Moore (1746-1815).⁴⁷

In 1768 Mountain Run in Orange (where Thomas had preached when driven out of Culpeper), which had been an arm of Broad Run, was constituted and Nathaniel Saunders ordained to its care.⁴⁸

The same year Little River in Loudoun was constituted with fifteen members from Broad Run by David and Joseph Thomas.⁴⁹ Richard Major (1720-1802) was ordained as pastor.

About 1765 a number of members of Broad Run moved to Halifax County and in 1769 twenty of them were constituted

45. Fristoe, 60.

46. Edwards, *Virginia*.

47. Fristoe, 9.

48. Semple, 177.

49. Semple, 305. Joseph Thomas, a Welshman, was from New Britain, Pennsylvania.

by John Garrard and Nathaniel Saunders as Birch Creek (Mill Church, now in Pittsylvania).⁵⁰ John Creel became its pastor. In 1771 The Manor in Fauquier was organized.⁵¹ All nine of its constituent members came from Broad Run. William Fristoe, who lived forty miles away, preached to them monthly.

Besides the churches that sprang from David Thomas's evangelizing there were several of other origins. New Valley in Loudoun was constituted in 1767 from a meeting "set up" by Joseph Thomas, who settled in this neighborhood in 1765 and was ordained the following year.⁵²

In 1770 Great Bethel, in the "Red Stone Settlement" (Uniontown, now in Pennsylvania), was organized with Isaac Sutton as its pastor⁵³—the first Baptist church planted west of the Alleghanies.

Buck Marsh in Frederick County (now Berryville in Clarke) was planted by Daniel and William Fristoe who preached monthly, "though the distance was about seventy miles." After its constitution in 1771 by John Marks and John Garrard (later its pastor) it was joined by "a considerable number" dismissed from Mill Creek.⁵⁴

All of these churches were admitted promptly to membership in the Kettocton Association.

The oldest known minutes of the Kettocton Association are for its meeting at Mountain Run in 1772. John Marks was chosen moderator. Marks and George Lewis were present from Kettocton; John VanMeter from Mill Creek; John Alderson, Sr. and John Alderson, Jr. from Smith's Creek; David Thomas and Robt. Sanders from Broad Run; Thomas George from New Valley; Rich'd Major, Eli Cleveland and William

50. Broad Run Minute Book.

51. So called from the Manor of Lord Fairfax who gave the land for the meeting house. The name was changed to Thumb Run. (Edwards, *Virginia*. Fristoe, 10.)

52. Edwards, *Virginia*. Semple, 306.

53. Mill Creek Minute Book. Asplund (1791), 22.

54. Buck Marsh Minute Book. Fristoe, 10. Semple, 321.

Pickett from Little River; Nath. Sanders, Thos. Chambers, Uriel Mallory and Frs. Bourn from Mountain Run; John Creel from Birch Creek; Dan'l Fristoe and William King from Chappawamsic; William Fristoe and Thomas Threlkeld from Potomac; John Rogers and Henry Rogers from Manor; Owen Davis from Great Bethel; Stephen Johnson from Buck Marsh. Edwards lists twelve of the thirteen churches as having ordained pastors. Six of these pastors had from one to three unordained assistants whose duty it was to look after the branches where meeting houses had been built. The total membership of all churches except Buck Marsh⁵⁵ was 1,121, while the number of families coming under the influence of the twelve churches was put at 1,657. The smaller number of members than of families was due to care that those admitted should have had before baptism a definite experience of vital religion and should maintain the moral conduct consonant with their profession of regeneration. The churches disciplined by suspension or exclusion those members or ministers who fell into the current vices of excessive drinking or immoral conduct, but restored them on evidence of sincere repentance.⁵⁶

The manner of constituting churches, the qualifications of ministers and their support are discussed by Fristoe.⁵⁷ In addition to ministers and deacons the churches at first had ruling elders, who, like deacons, were called out by the church "on trial of their gifts and other qualifications"⁵⁸ before they were chosen permanently. This office was soon dispensed with. The churches observed the laying on of hands after baptism, accord-

55. Edwards, who collected his "Materials" on his trip through Virginia in 1772, has no data for Buck Marsh.

56. In 1774 John Alderson, pastor of Smith's Creek since 1756, was suspended for "unseemly behavior with a woman." He was restored by repentance in 1777. (Smith's Creek Minute Book.) In 1787 John Garrard, who had been pastor of Mill Creek for thirty-two years, was suspended in March for "drinking to excess" and was restored in May, "satisfaction being made." He died in August of that year. (Mill Creek Minute Book.)

57. Fristoe, 23-25, 31-38, 55-60.

58. Smith's Creek Minute Book, 1756, 1763.

ing to the Philadelphia Confession of Faith.⁵⁹ Most of them admitted "devoting children," satirically called "dry christening."⁶⁰ But these practices were gradually outgrown and abandoned.

The meetings for discipline and business were held on the Saturday before the preaching Sunday. In these local democracies all the free male members were not only entitled to participate in speech and suffrage, but were required to attend and to exercise their constitutional rights. If a member had a disagreement with another, the church undertook to bring them into harmony again, and if the disagreement was with a member of a neighboring church, the two churches took up the matter and worked at it until a settlement was reached.

It was at the monthly Saturday meetings that the church faced its principal and persistent problem—the right-living of its members. Drinking, gambling, brawling, profanity and immorality were so prevalent that it is small wonder that many members, drawn as they were from all classes, including the Negro servants, in such an environment and so young in their new life, should have fallen back at times into old habits. But the churches set their standards and adhered to them and lifted their communities to higher levels of life.

Helpers in the Ministry

Associated with David Thomas in these evangelizing and pastoral activities were six younger helpers. Nathaniel Saunders "though not a preacher of great talents was sound in the faith. He lived and died, in the estimation of all that knew him, a pious and good man."⁶¹

59. Philadelphia Confession, Chapter XXXI.

60. Leland, 120.

61. Semple, 177n. Saunders joined Broad Run in 1763, began to preach in 1766, was ordained in 1768 to be pastor of Mountain Run and continued its care until its dissolution in 1782.

Richard Major was "not a man of much school learning but his vigorous mind rose above all obstructions. . . . Devoting himself to the study of the scriptures . . . in simplicity and sincerity he preached Christ." "There were two particulars in which he excelled—an affectionate spirit and habits of indefatigable industry. Such was the urbanity of his manners that all who knew him were compelled to love him. He was kind in his reproofs and warnings and with peculiar earnestness recommended to his dying fellowmen Christ as willing and able to save all that came to him. With an iron constitution, he was able to endure the severest hardships."⁶²

Daniel Fristoe was ordained in 1771, when thirty-one years of age, to be co-pastor with David Thomas of Chappawamsic. He had "received when young a tolerable English education." "His knowledge in the scriptures and his manner of communicating his ideas in easy and intelligent manner were not equal to many others, yet his warmth and engagedness in treating on common and interesting subjects rendered him very useful in awakening sinners and stirring up and warming the hearts of Christians." At the meeting of the Philadelphia Association in 1774, just before Fristoe's death from smallpox, James Manning, President of Rhode Island College, heard him preach "with such clearness, life and power, though not a man of liberal education, as fired his soul with fresh zeal and courage in preaching salvation to perishing souls."⁶³

William Fristoe, younger brother of Daniel, was twenty-one when he was ordained in 1769. Semple wrote of him in his old age that "though not versed in the learning of the schools, he displays abilities which many doctors of divinity have not obtained. His language though plain is strong and nervous. His manner is solemn, as one having authority. He is a strong Calvinist in his principles and preaches them fully as much as

62. Semple, 432. Jas. B. Taylor, *Virginia Baptist Ministers*, Series I.

63. Fristoe, 14-15. Backus, III, 220.

is proper." In 1774, when in his twenty-sixth year, and often afterwards, he was elected to preside over the meeting of the Kectocon Association. "The high stand which he occupied was principally gained by his intelligence and discretion. For his prudence he was remarkable."⁶⁴

John Creel joined Broad Run by baptism the day after its constitution. With other members of that church he moved to Halifax County in 1766 and went into the organization of Birch Creek (Mill Church) in 1769. He was ordained by David Thomas in 1771 and took care of the church until his death in 1785. "A most amiable man and a very successful preacher. His talents, though not conspicuous, were solid. He was universally loved by all descriptions of people."⁶⁵

When David Thomas baptized Jeremiah Moore he said, "I think I have this day baptized a preacher," and so the event proved. William Wirt describes him as "a powerful man—my favorite preacher in early life."⁶⁶

Statements of Belief

The theology of these men was based on the "Confession of Faith put forth by the Elders and Brethren of many Congregations of Christians (Baptized upon Profession of their Faith) in London and the Country" in 1689.⁶⁷ This was adopted in 1742 by the Philadelphia Association, with the addition of chapters approving "singing the praises of God in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs," and "laying on of hands with prayer upon baptized believers."⁶⁸

64. Semple, 314. *Virginia Baptist Ministers*, Series I.

65. Semple, 255.

66. Kennedy, II, 386.

67. This is the Westminster Confession of 1648, "making use of the very same words declaring hearty agreement in wholesome Protestant doctrine," "but with some things added, some terms omitted and some few changes" to bring it into conformity with distinctive Baptist principles and practices. (McGlothlin, 216, 224.)

68. For the Philadelphia Confession see Cathcart, 1311.

In the covenant of the Smith's Creek Church, adopted at its organization in 1756, the subscribers state among the articles of their belief "all those Principles of Doctrine and Religious Practices contained in the Profession of Faith adopted by the Baptist Association at Philadelphia."

The Kettocton Association formulated no statement of belief for many years. "As many may never have read the Baptist Confession of Faith," Fristoe inserted in his *History of the Kettocton Association* (1808) "a few of its leading doctrines" in eleven paragraphs, freely condensed.

In 1774 David Thomas published in Baltimore:

The
VIRGINIAN BAPTIST
or
A View and Defense of the Christian Religion
as it is professed by the
Baptists of Virginia.

In three parts;
Containing a true and faithful Account

I Of their Principles.
II Of their Order as a Church.
III Of the principal Objections made against them,
especially in this colony,
With a serious Answer to each of them.

By DAVID THOMAS, A. M.
A Baptist Minister of Fauquier, in Virginia.

In the first part Thomas stated that for "the religious principles maintained by us as a professing people" he might refer "to the confession of faith put forth by the delegates of several Baptist Congregations in England upward of a hundred years

ago. . . . This we have adopted as our own. . . . As this was never yet printed in Virginia, but few of our countrymen have had an opportunity of perusing it. . . . I shall therefore present you with the substance of what we profess to believe." He condensed into seventeen articles the thirty-four chapters of the Philadelphia Confession, revising, omitting, and adding with much freedom.

The subjects of these articles, and extracts from some of them which differ markedly in substance or expression from the Confession, are:

Article I. The Holy Scriptures.

II. The Divine Being.

III. The Holy Trinity.

IV. The Creation and the Fall of Man.

V. The State of Man Since the Fall. All mankind are born in a state of condemnation and are transgressors from the womb. The dead as soon might leave their tombs, or dry bones awake and live, as natural men by any virtue in them repent and turn to God. During his residence in the dark region of spiritual death, no man can do anything divinely good. Nay, all his performances whether natural or civil or religious are but just so many sins in the sight of God. For without faith it is impossible to please him. And that faith we are by nature altogether destitute of, nor is it to be obtained but by the operation of the Holy-Ghost.

VI. Predestination. This doctrine ought to be handled with great care and circumspection. It is one of the deep things of God and cannot be fully comprehended by us. The persons of the elect are not to be distinguished by us from sinners. Therefore, the Gospel is to be preached to every creature. And all that hear are bound to obey it on pain of an aggravated damnation. For as God is not the author of their sin so neither is he chargeable with their ruin. Nor do they perish for want of a Saviour, but for rejecting him. It is not any decree of God, but their own unbelief, that is the cause of their perdition.

VII. Christ as Mediator.

VIII. Regeneration or the New Birth. It is an irresistible work of the holy-spirit wrought in the soul, whereby the dark understanding is enlightened; the obstinate will is subdued; and the carnal affections are spiritualized. Doubtless this renovation of heart will be followed with a corresponding reformation of manners and a suitable deportment. This work of God in the renovation of his people was, is, and must be experienced by the children of God in all ages from the fall of Adam to the end of the world.

IX. Saving Faith. It is an act of the new creature whereby he beholds the glory of the Lord and is changed into the same image, discovers the sufficiency and suitableness of Christ as a Saviour, and utterly renouncing all other dependencies, receives and embraces and apprehends and lays hold of, and trusts in him for complete and everlasting salvation. No empty speculation, nor a transitory commotion of the passions, nor any enthusiastic impulse, but a deliberate rational application to Jesus Christ, and a solid, real, acceptance of him as he offers himself in the Gospel. This power of believing is not born with us. None of us brought it into the world. But it was a gift, a supernatural gift of God. And he that hath it shall infallibly be saved.

X. Justification before God. Righteousness is imputed by God the father to everyone of his people when they believe and not before. For faith is the only instrument by which Christ Jesus and his saving benefits are discovered, apprehended, and received by us. To be justified then in a Gospel sense is to have the guilt of sin remitted, and to be pronounced perfectly just by the Great Judge of men and angels. Such persons being united to Christ do enjoy communion with him in his word and ordinances and may in process of time, in the diligent use of means, and by close walking with God, attain to a solid, well-grounded, full, and constant assurance of his love, so as to exclude all doubting, administer daily consolation to their souls; and fill them with joy unspeakable, and glorious beyond expression.

XI. Duties Required of Believers.

- XII. Church Power. The Almighty alone has reserved the government of conscience to himself, nor is it subject to any inferior jurisdiction. It ought not to be, nay it cannot be, swayed by human authority. For it is absolutely impossible to force conviction on the mind.
- XIII. Sacraments.
- XIV. The Sabbath.
- XV. Civil Privileges and Immunities. It is lawful for Christians to marry; to take an oath for confirmation of the truth before a magistrate; to bear arms in defense of their country when unjustly invaded; to clothe their bodies decently and becoming their station in the world; to eat and drink temperately. But the keeping of harlots; rash and customary swearing; personal quarrelling, superfluity in apparel, and feasting to excess, are by no means allowable under the Gospel dispensation. Neither is the singing of carnal songs, or the playing or dancing of wanton tunes, or the racing of horses, as it is commonly carried on, or the use of cards, and dice, and the like instruments of folly; and in brief, all those exercises and entertainments of pastime and merriment commonly termed recreations not to be tolerated in the church of Christ; or to be practised by any of his people. They being, all of them, contrary to the word of God.
- XVI. General Judgment.
- XVII. Eternity.

In Part II “the Order of the Baptist Church is briefly described”—its form and constitution; its officers (ministers, elders and deacons), their duties and the care to be taken in their selection, “especially to examine the gifts and graces of such whom they choose to the sacred ministry,” and the maintenance of the ministry; the government, business meetings and order of public worship in a Baptist church and the nature and design of a Baptist association (an advisory council in whose “superior judgment, as a company of the

most judicious persons belonging to them all, the churches commonly acquiesce"). Of the business meetings Thomas says:

These are always on week days. Every member is to attend unless providentially prevented. At these meetings we meddle not with any state affairs. We form no intrigues, nor make any attempts to alter the constitution of the kingdom to which we belong. We comply with all the laws. We have no clandestine designs, as some malevolent whisperers have represented to our prejudice.

At these meetings we consider and adjust all matters relating to the peace, order and edification of the church. We choose officers, when wanted, enquire into the conduct of members; acquit the innocent, receive the penitent and pass judgment upon irreclaimable offenders. We consult our ability and provide buildings and other necessaries for worship.

Part III answers "the principal objections that are, or have been, made against the Baptists, especially in this Colony." But Thomas does not list "all that ignorance or malice has mustered up against us," for "many more are so frivolous, they are not worth mentioning." "Such only as have a show of reason" he takes up, and states succinctly the grounds for "dissenting from the Church of England," for "refusing to commune with those of other denominations," for "refusing to baptize infants," for "immersion in baptism" and for "making divisions." In explanation of the Baptists' "not using the Lord's Prayer," Thomas says:

The Disciples never using this prayer that we have any account of, is indisputable evidence that they understood our Savior as we do, viz. that he designed that form of words only as a perfect pattern to direct us in all our addresses to the throne of grace but not to confine us just to these identical expressions. If persons understand the petitions and find a sacred sweetness in them we do not object against their using them.

In reply to the charge of "condemning others" and continually exclaiming against the Established Church he says:

We steadfastly affirm that no profane or irreligious or self-righteous persons continuing so, shall ever see the kingdom of God; let them be of what denomination they will, our own not excepted. Is this an evidence that we have no charity for our neighbours? Is it dooming man to destruction to tell them of their disease, that they may seek a remedy in time before it becomes incurable?

As to the established church, if any of our sect have spoken disrespectful of her as such, it was imprudent of them to do so. It is indecent and absurd to rail at other peoples' infirmities, whether real or fancied. It is not quite equitable to lay the ignorance or inadvertent temerity of a few weak persons on a whole body of people, the majority of whom are altogether innocent of it. The worst we have ever said of that church, so far as I know, is that whatever prosperity she may have enjoyed formerly, to us she appears at present to be reduced to a very languishing condition. We are far from exulting in her decaying state, but do lament and bewail it, and would gladly contribute all in our power to effect her restoration and recovery.

Against the charges of poverty and the want of learning and the common report that the Baptists "reject and deny human learning altogether and pretend to be immediately inspired as the Apostles were," he says:

The greater part of every denomination are as poor and as unlearned as we. But riches and honor and carnal wisdom are no badges of the Christian Religion. That we deny the use of human learning, is a mistake. Though we do not approve of it as a mistress; yet we do esteem it as a serviceable handmaid. Although it is a desirable attainment in itself; yet it is, when alone, even in persons of the strongest capacities, utterly insufficient to shew them the way to salvation. Therefore, it is exceeding dangerous to trust in it, or depend upon it.

That we pretend to immediate inspiration we also deny. We grant that blessing ceased with the Apostles. But there are several degrees of inspiration as of other things. And one degree of inspiration is, to have such a measure of the Holy Spirit of God, as is sufficient to make us new creatures at first and to enable us to worship him acceptably afterward. And this we maintain, agreeable both to scripture and reason, is the common privilege, not only of every faithful minister of Christ, but of all true Christians. *For if any man have not the spirit of Christ he is none of his.*

In answer to the accusation that "you are always thundering out peals of damnation enough to drive all weak people into despair and strenuously forbid all recreation, pastime and merriment on pain of hell," Thomas replies:

Sinners must be convinced of their danger or they will never labour to obtain a remedy. But do we not also hold forth the consolations of the Gospel? Do we not proclaim full, free, and everlasting salvation, even to the chief of sinners, upon their believing in CHRIST? And if so, what cause is there for any of our hearers to fall into despair? Nor did I ever know an instance of it under our ministry. People are not so easily scared as some men pretend to think they are. However, we are commanded to give the wicked warning, *and to lift up our voices like a trumpet* when we do so. And we must obey GOD rather than man.

As to objections to "your noisy meetings," Thomas says:

Vociferations and obstreperous commotions never were the effects of my preaching, nor are approved by our churches as any part of religion. I am in no ways obligated to vindicate any or all of them. The first appearance of it was under the preaching of Rev. George Whitefield, a noted priest of the Church of England. From him certain Presbyterians caught the fire and zealously fanned the flame for some years. At last it kindled among some Baptists, where it continues burning to this day. Now, whether this fire is celestial or terrestrial or of what nature it is, I shall not undertake to determine. Those who think it is of God are the fittest to defend it. I confess that I can find no account of it in the word of GOD.

One of the charges against the Baptists which Thomas dismissed categorically as having its origin in ignorance or malice and being without a show of reason, Fristoe records more fully:

The vain supposition was that when once they supposed themselves sufficiently strong, that they would fall on their fellow subjects, massacre the inhabitants and take possession of the country. Groundless and stupid as this conjecture was, it was spoken of from one to the other until many of the old bigots would feel their tempers inflamed and their blood run quick in their veins and declare they would take up arms and destroy the New Lights.⁶⁹

69. Fristoe, 65-6.

Opposition and Obstructions

Not only was David Thomas prevented by a mob from preaching in Culpeper, but in Stafford he met with violent opposition which prevented public worship.⁷⁰ "Ashby's gang" threw a live snake and a hornet's nest into the congregation and brought firearms to disperse them. When these forty men entered the house to harass their worship some stout fellows resented it and threw Ashby out of doors, "which involved the whole multitude in a bloody fray."

As he was preaching in a tobacco barn, Thomas was dragged out through such clenching of fists and gnashing of teeth that his friends feared he would be pounded to pieces by the mob. When a man started to shoot Thomas, a bystander wrenched the gun from him. A general fight followed in which many were hurt.

At Bull Run in Fairfax warrants were issued against Richard Major and a mob with clubs gathered to assist their execution. They were repelled by the "giant" Davis brothers, who had come to oppose him, but after they heard him preach, defended him.⁷¹

Combined with these acts of violence were efforts to break up the meetings by interruptions, ridicule, abusive epithets and indecent talk.⁷²

While the rougher element employed such abuse, many of higher social standing vented their contempt for these "New Lights," and often men would prevent their wives and children from going to hear them lest they should be deceived. In instances where children appeared affected by the gospel, their

70. Semple, 311.

71. Edwards, *Virginia*.

72. Fristoe gives other cases that came to his knowledge of violence "by the baser sort" to break up worshipping assemblies and interrupt baptisms and states that attempts to appeal to the court for protection were futile. (76) He was pursued by Sheriff Young with intent to kill but escaped. The Sheriff afterwards became a Baptist "and a most humble and contrite christian." (Edwards, *Virginia*.)

parents, much distressed, "threatened to cast them off and dispossess them, telling them they would render themselves ridiculous in the world and never more be in common credit."⁷³

The clergy of the Established Church attacked the Baptists from the pulpit calling them false prophets and wolves in sheep's clothing. Their arguments were generally drawn from the extravagances of the German Anabaptists. To this the Baptists replied "that they disclaimed all connection with the Anabaptists and felt themselves no more responsible for their irregularities than the Episcopalians could feel for the fooleries of the Papists; that the Bible was a criterion; by that they were willing to stand or fall."⁷⁴ The natural resentment of the people against these attacks on their leaders found expression in charges against the parsons of the Establishment who were in some instances very vulnerable.⁷⁵

Sometimes they met with opposition from the Presbyterians. At Little River in Loudoun, where Richard Major's success was "amazing," the neighboring Presbyterian minister (Amos Thompson) mimicked and mocked them in the pulpit. He challenged David Thomas to a public debate, which was held before an audience of several hundred.⁷⁶

73. Fristoe, 68. "The cant word was that they are an ignorant, illiterate set and are of the poor and contemptible class of the people." Actually they were generally "in middling circumstances." (64, 152.)

74. "Parson Gibbern has preached several sermons in opposition to them in which he has laboured to convince his people that what they say are only whimsical Fancies or at most Religion grown to Wildness and Enthusiasm." (Fithian, March 6, 1774.)

75. Meade II, 353.

"Parson Gibbern ill of his last week's Bout! he was up three nights successively drinking & playing Cards, so that the liquor & want of sleep put him quite out of his Sences—a rare tale this to relate of a Man of God! Old Satan will sadly belabour such overgrown Sinners." (Fithian, October 3, 1774.)

The antagonism created was the occasion of a letter to Nathaniel Saunders from William Green in 1767 about "the late disturbances between your congregation and some of the Members of our Church." (Little, 78.)

76. Edwards, *Virginia*.

Archibald Alexander states that Amos Thompson defended David Thomas when he was threatened with violence. (Alexander, 228.)

Since both violence and contumely failed to arrest the movement, efforts were made to find legal embarrassments. In May following the organization of Broad Run in December, 1762, David Thomas and seventeen of its members were among the forty-one presented by the grand jury for absenting themselves from the parish church.⁷⁷ Obstructions and difficulties were put in obtaining licenses as ministers. These were no longer issued by county courts but only by the General Court which sat in Williamsburg twice a year. It placed the narrowest interpretation on the Act of Toleration and took the ground that a license was required not only for the man, as it had been, but for each meeting house and for only one in a county. William Fristoe thought:

It was intolerable for one set of men to make application to another set of men (cap in hand), and in the most humble posture, ask their consent and allowance to worship the God that made them, to publicly own the Lord Jesus that died for them, to talk and tell of his love, to inquire into and inculcate the precious word of life, the Gospel of salvation.⁷⁸

He preached without a license and was arrested, but made his escape and went to Philadelphia for advice. The brethren there counselled him to be qualified according to the Toleration Act.⁷⁹ "Intolerable as this was," says Fristoe, "necessity compelled us to comply, having no other alternative." He took to Williamsburg a petition from twenty free persons for a meeting house with certificates from two magistrates that the signers were inhabitants of the place. The latter were difficult to obtain. When the petition was presented to the General Court, it adopted every measure to avoid granting it. After the license had been granted for the place, the preacher had to pass an examination by a clergyman of the Established Church and

77. Hamilton Parish. Fauquier Order Book, 1763-4, p. 43. Fristoe, 69.

78. Fristoe, 73.

79. Edwards, *Virginia*.

subscribe to the Thirty-nine Articles (with the omissions permitted dissenters). The president of the College of William and Mary, when applied to for this service, refused to afford dissenters a hearing or perform any offices for them. Two other clergymen teaching in the College also declined. But a country parson "in a friendly and courteous manner did the business."⁸⁰

In spite of the difficulties, the preachers generally managed to obtain licenses, and the common belief was widespread that they were unlimited and not confined to a single meeting house.⁸¹ When warrants were issued for Daniel Fristoe, Richard Major, Philip Spiller, Alderson Weeks, and others, they were not executed or the cases were dismissed.⁸² An exhorter exercising his gifts in a licensed meeting house was committed to the jailor who shut him up in "a disagreeable dungeon," from which he was discharged when he came to trial.⁸³

Meanwhile the "Gospel hungry" people flocked to hear the preachers. They were deeply moved by their messages and spread them from the hearers to their neighbors in spite of all attempts to prevent them.⁸⁴

Commotions

The control of the excitement from their fears and new found hope was a problem for the preachers. As David Thomas disowned "commotions as any part of religion,"⁸⁵ so did William Fristoe, who wrote:

80. Fristoe, 72-5. For his similar experience see Ireland, 177-8.

81. "Self preservation inclined us to keep the secret." (Fristoe, 85.)

82. Edwards, *Virginia*.

83. Fristoe, 80, 82-3.

84. The reason given in a petition of the minister and sundry inhabitants for a division of Hamilton Parish in Fauquier (where Broad Run was located) was "that many reside so far from their parish churches that they can but seldom attend public worship, from which causes dissenters have oportunities and encouragement to propagate their pernicious doctrines." (Journal of the House of Burgesses, May 5, 1769.)

85. Fristoe, 51.

We are satisfied that where a work of God has been carrying on, enthusiasm, more or less, has accompanied; but it is no way related to, nor forms any part of religion, and ought to be discountenanced by the wise. The Great Creator endowed rational creatures with noble passions and made them capable of sorrow, love, hatred, desire, &c., and proper use of those passions ought to be exercised, when under the ministry of the Gospel or employed in divine contemplation. It is no wonder the passions are raised while the heart glows with love to God and Christ and everything sacred and divine. . . . But for the passions to be overwhelmed by sound, fabulous reports, by clash and noise to the confounding of reason where the understanding remains uninformed and the person so exercised quite unable to give any rational account of himself, is a great abuse of the passions, and although it may be momentary satisfaction to seducers, to obtain such ascendancy over their hearers, the consequence has often been very dreadful.⁸⁶

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But the great crowds under high emotional tension could not always be restrained from giving vent to their feelings. Daniel Fristoe described in his journal such an emotional upheaval the day after his ordination in 1771 to share the pastoral care of Chappawamsic:

This day I began to act as an ordained minister and never before saw such manifest appearances of God's working and the devil's raging at one time and in one place. My first business was to examine candidates for baptism, who related what God did for their souls in such a manner as to affect many present; then the opposers grew very troublesome, particularly one James Naylor, who after raging and railing for a while fell down and began to tumble and beat the ground with both ends like a fish when it drops off the hook on dry land, cursing and blaspheming God all the while; at last a gentleman offered ten shillings to any that would bind him and take him out of the place, which was soon earned by some stout fellows that stood by. Sixteen persons were adjudged fit subjects of baptism. The next day (being Sunday) about 2,000 people came together. Many more offered for baptism, 13 of which were judged worthy.

As we stood by the water the people were weeping and crying in a most extraordinary manner; and others cursing and swearing and act-

86. Fristoe, 51.

ing like men possessed. In the midst of this, a tree tumbled down being overloaded with people who (Zacheus like) had climbed up to see baptism administered; the coming down of that tree occasioned the adjacent trees to fall also being loaded in the same manner but none was hurt. When the ordinance was administered and I had laid hands on the parties baptized, we sang those charming words of Dr. Watts, "Come, we who love the Lord" &c. The multitude sang and wept and smiled in tears, holding up their hands and countenances towards heaven in such a manner as I had not seen before. In going home I turned to look at the people who remained by the water side and saw some screaming on the ground, some wringing their hands, some in ecstasies of joy, some praying; others cursing and swearing and exceedingly outrageous. We have seen strange things today.⁸⁷

87. From Edwards, *Virginia*. Copied by Benedict, II, 305.

The Separates

1754 - 1772

IN the "Great Awakening" in New England in the 1740s members and ministers separated from the state established churches, in which religion was at a low ebb, and insisted on vital faith as a prerequisite to church membership. They were popularly called "Separates" and when some of them came to require personal faith prior to baptism, they were called "Separate Baptists." One of these, Shubal Stearns (1706-71), left his pastorate at Tolland, Connecticut, in August, 1754, "filled with missionary zeal to carry light into dark places," and joined his brother-in-law, Daniel Marshall, at Mill Creek. His party and the Marshalls settled for a while on Cacapon in Hampshire County, Virginia, about 30 miles from Winchester.¹

As Stearns did not meet with the expected success, he became restless. He received a letter from friends who had gone to North Carolina, telling of people spiritually destitute but "so eager to hear that they often came forty miles each way when they could have an opportunity to hear a sermon."² Stearns and his party got under way in the summer of 1755, and traveled two hundred miles until they settled in North Carolina on Sandy Creek in Guilford (now Randolph) County and organized a church with Stearns as pastor. The constituent members were Shubal Stearns, Peter Stearns, Ebenezer Stearns, Shubal Stearns, Jr., Enos Stinson, Jonathan Polk and their wives, who were baptized before they left Connecticut, and

1. Semple, 1-3, 366.

2. Backus, III, 274.

Daniel Marshall, Joseph Breed and their wives, who had been baptized at Mill Creek by Samuel Heaton.³ They built a meeting house and "began their work, kindling a fire which soon began to burn brightly." The membership swelled rapidly from sixteen to more than six hundred.⁴ A branch on Abbot's Creek was organized and Daniel Marshall ordained as its pastor by his brothers-in-law, Stearns and Henry Leadbetter.

As other churches were formed, Stearns visited them and in 1758 organized them into the Sandy Creek Association, as he "conceived that an association composed of delegates from all would have a tendency to impart stability, regularity and uniformity to the whole."⁵ Into the adjacent parts of Virginia the Gospel was carried by Marshall and a group of young preachers—Dutton Lane, William and Joseph Murphy, and James Read (1722-98).⁶

Samuel Harris

The Murphys were holding a meeting in a private house in that part of Halifax which since 1767 has been Pittsylvania County. Colonel Samuel Harris⁷ (1724-99), who was passing, went in to hear them. "The arrow of the Almighty stuck fast in him." Harris had held the offices of church warden, sheriff, justice of the County Court, member of the House of Burgesses, colonel of the militia of the county and commander of the fort on Mayo for protection against the Indians. All these offices he gave up after his baptism by Marshall in 1758 and "devoted not only himself, but almost all his property, to religious objects." "He had begun a large new dwelling house, suitable to his former dignity, which as soon as it was covered in, he appro-

3. Paschal, 227.

4. Semple, 3-4.

5. Semple, 6, 43. Paschal, 228, 394.

6. Semple, 390-2, 401.

7. "Near Allen's Creek on the road from Booker's Ferry on Staunton River to Pittsylvania Court House." (*Virginia Baptist Ministers*, I, 31.)

priated to the use of public worship, continuing to live in the old one." In 1759 he was made a ruling elder and an evangelist and he preached as a layman with great effectiveness for ten years before he permitted himself to be ordained. He possessed a "vigorous and cultivated mind" and "his manners were of the most winning sort, having a singular talent at touching the feelings."⁸

James Craig, minister of the Established Church in Cumberland Parish, Lunenburg County, reported in 1759 that "whenever the Baptists appeared the people flocked over to them." He wrote:

In Halifax one Samuel Harris, formerly Burgess for that County, and one William Murphy have raised and propagated a most shocking Delusion, which threatens the entire subversion of *true Religion* in these parts, unless the principal persons concerned in that delusion are apprehended or otherwise restrained."⁹

In 1760 Dan River in Halifax (later Pittsylvania County) was constituted by Marshall and Philip Mulkey with 74 members of whom eleven were Negroes.¹⁰ It was the first Separate Baptist church in Virginia and put out "branches" at Irvine River, New River and Buffalo River.

Mulkey and William Murphy went into that part of Lunenburg which is now Mecklenburg and gathered a group on Bluestone, made up largely of Negroes belonging to William Byrd III.¹¹ In 1761 Murphy was ordained to the care of a church

8. Edwards, *Virginia*. Semple, 379. In his signature to the memorials from the General Association in 1775 and 1780, and to his will in the Pittsylvania County Clerk's office, his name is spelled, Harris. Semple generally spells it, Harriss.

9. Dawson MSS, September 8, 1759.

10. The members included Harris, Dutton Lane, Thomas Hargat and their wives. Lane was ordained in 1764, "at which time he took on him the care of the church." (Edwards, *Virginia*.)

11. In "1758 or 1759 they were sufficiently numerous to exercise the rights of a church. Many of these poor slaves became bright and shining Christians. The breaking up of Byrd's quarters scattered these Blacks into various parts. It did not rob them of their religion. It is said that through their labours in the different neighborhoods into which they fell, many persons were brought to the knowledge of the truth and some of them persons of distinction." (Semple, 222-3.) Bluestone was not constituted until 1772.

on Staunton River which he had organized that year largely from emigrants pushing further west. It had branches on Holston and Upper Roanoke Rivers.¹² That same year Murphy organized Black Water (in what is now Franklin County), with 25 members, to which he ministered. It developed a branch on Little River in what is now Floyd County.¹³

Many of the preachers, like most of the men of their time, had little formal education, but made up for it by native ability and assiduous application. In the beginning of his ministry, William Murphy was said by James Craig to be unable "to read plain or write his name";¹⁴ but Edwards said, "He is reputed a man of wit and good judgment," and Semple speaks of his talents as "very considerable."¹⁵ James Read did not know how to read or write when he became a Baptist, but immediately began to learn under his wife's teachings.¹⁶ Laymen were encouraged to "exercise their gifts" and whites and blacks, men and women, of all degrees, took part in their meetings for prayer, praise and testimony. Stearns' sister, Martha, the wife of Daniel Marshall, "a lady of good sense, singular piety and surprising elocution, in countless instances melted a whole concourse into tears by her prayers and exhortations."¹⁷ But much caution was exercised in ordination, which came only after several years in which the candidate had shown himself fully qualified by proven ability and usefulness.¹⁸

Stearns and Marshall brought from Connecticut the message and the force and fire caught from Whitefield. These were inherited in turn by the young prophets who copied also some of the mannerisms of the older men which were the products of outdoor preaching.

12. Edwards, *Virginia*.

13. Edwards, *Virginia*.

14. Dawson MSS.

15. Semple, 391.

16. Semple, 402.

17. Semple, 374.

18. Taylor, John, *Ten Churches*, 29.

Their preaching emphasized the depravity of man, the atonement through Christ, consciousness of a "new birth" and the baptism of believers as an outward sign of a previous inward change.

They were not averse, as were the Regular Baptists, to emotional reactions in their congregations. Semple states that:

The Separates in New England had acquired a very warm and pathetic address accompanied by strong gestures and a singular tone of voice. Being often deeply affected themselves while preaching, correspondent affections were felt by their hearers which were frequently expressed by tears, trembling, screams, shouts and acclamations.¹⁹

In his account of Dan River Church, Edwards records "as hardly creditable what tremblings, outcries, downfalls and ecstasies of joy attended the ministry of the church." These demonstrations, the freedom of utterance and the democracy in their churches brought criticism from conservatives. A Regular Baptist minister in South Carolina, to whom Stearns applied for help in ordaining Marshall, "sternly refused, declaring that he held no fellowship with Stearns' party; that he believed them to be a disorderly set, suffering women to pray in public and permitting every ignorant man to preach that chose; that they encouraged noise and confusion in their meetings."²⁰

James Craig called them "ignorant Enthusiasts."²¹ John Wright, a Presbyterian minister, besides "railing at them and slandering them to their faces," wrote to Harris, "The more I consider the religion of the Baptists and the religion of the Bible, the more fully am I convinced that it is an awful delusion."²²

19. Semple, 4.

20. Semple, 5.

21. Dawson, MSS.

22. Edwards, *Virginia*.

On the other hand the conservative John Gano, who was then pastor of the Regular Baptist church in the Jersey Settlement in North Carolina, attended the second (1759) session of the Sandy Creek Association, sent by the Charleston Association to inquire into the state of these "New Light" Baptists. When he returned, being asked what he thought of them, he replied that, "doubtless the power of God was among them, that altho' they were rather immethodical, they certainly had the root of the matter at heart."²³

In their endeavor to conform to all the New Testament practices, the churches generally observed the "Nine Christian Rites"—baptism, the Lord's Supper, love feasts, laying on of hands after baptism, washing feet, anointing the sick, the right hand of fellowship, the kiss of charity, and devoting children. Besides pastors and deacons, they elected also evangelists, ruling elders, elderesses and deaconesses, and celebrated communion weekly. The neglect of some of these was no bar to fellowship in the Sandy Creek Association and many of them were later outmoded.²⁴

The Sandy Creek Association

Large factors in spreading the movement were the meetings of the Association, held for three or four days with the Sandy Creek Church under the guidance of Stearns. "The great power of God was among us," James Read wrote of the meeting to which he went. "The preaching every day seemed to be attended with God's blessing. We carried on our association with sweet decorum and fellowship to the end. Then we took leave of one another with many solemn charges from our reverend old father, Shubal Stearns."²⁵

23. Semple, 44-5.

24. Benedict, II, 107.

25. Semple, 44.

Through these meetings the Gospel was carried into many new places. Great crowds came from distant parts, mostly through curiosity. Many became enamored with these extraordinary people and petitioned the Association to send preachers into their neighborhoods. These petitions were readily granted and the preachers as readily complied with the appointments.

The Associational meetings were instrumental in another way:

When assembled, their chief employment was preaching, exhortations, singing and conversing about their exertions in the Redeemer's service and the attendant success. These things so inflamed the hearts of the ministers that they would leave the Association with a zeal and courage which no obstacles could impede.²⁶

The Separates Move North

Allen Wyley, who in 1763 had brought David Thomas to his home in Culpeper²⁷ and had found the opposition there so vigorous that Thomas was driven into Orange, did not succeed in getting him to come back as often as was wished. For Thomas had urgent calls to preach in other places where interference was not so great. Hearing of the Separate Baptist preachers in Pittsylvania (then part of Halifax), Wyley traveled in January, 1765, to that county to get them to preach in Culpeper. He fell in with one of Samuel Harris' meetings. Harris agreed to accompany him. As they went, these two laymen exhorted and prayed at every house where they stopped. Arriving in Culpeper, Harris preached at Wyley's home with-

26. Semple, 6-7.

27. Since 1833, Rappahannock County. The foundations of Wyley's home are 1.5 miles south of Flint Hill on the Battle Run Road. The Baptist pastor's home in Flint Hill is built of its stones. Wyley was dismissed by Broad Run to join "Orange" (Mountain Run). In 1768 he was imprisoned in Orange County for preaching. In 1771 he was a constituent member of Potomac and assistant to William Fristoe (Edwards, Virginia). "He has maintained an upright character as a zealous and pious professor." (Semple, 7n.) Several deeds for land purchased by him are recorded in Culpeper, as is his will in 1812.

out interruption the first day. But on the second day, violent opposition, such as had greeted Thomas, was raised by men armed with whips, sticks and clubs. Like Thomas he went into Orange and preached many days from place to place with much effect. Great crowds attended and many were seriously awakened. When Harris left them, he exhorted them to be steadfast and advised some of them, in whom he discovered talents, to commence the exercise of their gifts and to hold meetings among themselves. The young converts took this advice and together with those who, like the Craigs—Lewis (1741-1824) and Elijah (-1808), had been earlier awakened by David Thomas' preaching, began to hold meetings in Elijah Craig's tobacco house every Sabbath, and almost every night at each other's houses. "By these little prayer and exhortation meetings great numbers were awakened and several converted."²⁸

They applied to David Thomas to preach for them and teach them more perfectly. He came but expressed disapprobation of the preaching of such untrained and uneducated persons. This was like throwing water on their flaming zeal. They took umbrage and resolved to send for Harris.²⁹

In 1766 Elijah Craig and two others traveled to Harris' home to get him to preach and to baptize the new converts. They found to their surprise that he had not been ordained. He went with them sixty miles into North Carolina to get James Read, who had been ordained. Read had already felt impressed by the desire to preach in Virginia. He, Graves, a member of his church, Harris and two of Craig's party set out together for Orange, while the third had ridden ahead to appoint meetings on the way. In about a fortnight they arrived in the locality where Blue Run was later constituted and found awaiting them a large congregation to which they preached with effect. The next day they preached at Elijah Craig's to a vast crowd.

28. Semple, 7, 415.

29. Semple, 8.

There the two fires met, for David Thomas and John Garrard, leading ministers of the Regulars, were present. The preachers of both groups seemed desirous to unite, but the people, who largely sided with the Separates, opposed it. Both parties held meetings the next day (Sunday) and administered baptism. This widened the breach. Harris and Read extended their preaching, going through Spotsylvania into Caroline, Hanover, and Goochland, with so much encouragement that they engaged to come again next year.

In 1767 some of the leaders of the group in Spotsylvania attended the Sandy Creek Association and obtained the promise of a presbytery to constitute their first church. When Harris and Read returned they brought with them Dutton Lane, pastor of Dan River, and in November, 1767, they organized Upper Spotsylvania. It consisted of twenty-five members and included all the Separate Baptists north of James River.³⁰ Harris and Read continued to come annually for several years. People flocked to their meetings from distances of fifty and even a hundred miles and, after exercises which continued late into the night, hundreds camped on the ground in order to be present the next day.³¹

In December, 1769, Lower Spotsylvania was constituted with thirty members and Blue Run (also called "Rapid-ann") in Orange, with fifty-four members.³²

The next year three young men, Lewis and Elijah Craig and John Waller (1741-1802), who had proven their call to the ministry by preaching effectively for several years, were ordained—Waller for the pastorate of Lower Spotsylvania, Elijah Craig to the care of Blue Run, and Lewis Craig for the oversight of Upper Spotsylvania, which he had been instrumental in gathering and where he had been ruling elder for a year.³³

30. Edwards, *Virginia*. Semple, 9.

31. Semple, 10.

32. Edwards, *Virginia*.

33. Edwards, *Virginia*. Semple, 11.

After the meeting of the leaders of the two groups in 1766 and their inability to unite, attempts were made on both sides to effect a reconciliation. But some of the popular leaders among the Separates thought the Regulars not sufficiently particular in small matters such as simplicity in dress. They feared, also, that they might be too much bound by a Confession of Faith, such as the Regulars held to, parts of which the Separates found objectionable. A majority of the Regulars favored union, but some of them wished, as a condition, the adoption by the Separates of the Philadelphia Confession.³⁴

In 1769 the Kettocton Association of Regular Baptists sent John Garrard, Richard Major and Nathaniel Saunders as fraternal messengers to the Separate association, meeting at Sandy Creek, North Carolina, with a letter:

Beloved in our Lord Jesus Christ,

The bearers of this letter can acquaint you with the design of writing it. Their errand is peace, and their business is a reconciliation between us, if there is any difference subsisting. If we are all Christians, all Baptists, all New-lights, why are we divided? . . . Must the little appellative names, Regular and Separate, break the golden band of charity, and set the sons and daughters of Zion at variance? "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity," but how bad and how bitter it is, for them to live asunder in discord. . . . To indulge ourselves in prejudice, is surely a disorder; and to quarrel about nothing, is irregularity with a witness. O! our dear brethren, endeavor to prevent this calamity for the future.

"This excellent letter was presented to the association, and after a lengthy debate, the proposal for an union, was rejected by a small majority." Their reply was:

Excuse us in love; for we are acquainted with our own order but not so well with yours; and if there is a difference we might ignorantly jump into that which might make us rue it.³⁵

34. "Jealousies arising between them, from some cause, produced the unhappy division which continued so long to disturb their peace. The breach was never very wide between them; not so wide but they often met in conferences." (Semple, 295.)

35. Semple, 46. Edwards, *Virginia*.

Amelia (Nottoway) and Jeremiah Walker

On its way to Sandy Creek, Garrard's party was joined in Amelia by Jeremiah Walker (1747-92), who had been preaching for several years in North Carolina and had come to Amelia in response to the request of Samuel Thompson. Thompson had been inviting his neighbors to his house where he conversed with them about soul affairs, prayed and read the Bible and Whitefield's and Samuel Davies's sermons. Hearing that there were persons on Dan River that preached these doctrines they traveled off to look for them.³⁶ In 1768 a petition "to license George Walton's house as a place for Separate Baptists to assemble and preach in," bearing thirty-two names, headed by Simeon Walton, was presented to the county court. It was rejected.³⁷ But Harris and Walker came and preached with such "demonstration of the Spirit and power" that in 1769 sixty-six persons were constituted a church on Nottoway River (then in Amelia, but since 1789 in Nottoway County). Walker moved from North Carolina and took its pastoral care.³⁸ Walker was an able and acceptable preacher, gifted with a strong memory and keen apprehension. He did not use the tone and actions employed by the Separates and discouraged the outcries and ecstasies so much thought of by them.³⁹ Of the "Nine Christian Rites" Nottoway Church observed only laying on of hands, baptism and the Lord's Supper.

James Ireland

Another addition to Garrard's party was James Ireland, barely twenty-one, who had come from Scotland a few years

36. Semple, 200.

37. Amelia County Order Book, November 24, 1768. Facsimile of petition is in Little, 146-7. George and Simeon Walton were leading citizens. Simeon was county surveyor and afterwards a Baptist minister. (Semple, 425.)

38. Edwards, *Virginia*. Semple, 201.

39. "His taste and inclination would rather lead him to associate with the Regular Baptists, but the others can not spare him. He was principal in draughting their petitions and remonstrances to the Assembly and in supporting the same in the House, where he gained the applause of the candid members as a man of sense and address." (Edwards, *Virginia*.)

before and was a schoolmaster in the neighborhood of Smith's Creek Church in Shenandoah. Through acquaintance with one of its members, Nicholas Fain, "who possessed what he professed," Ireland's dormant religious nature was effectively stirred. He and a friend twelve months before had heard the false reports spread about the Baptists and had made solemn oaths never to unite with them. But they now became the nucleus of a group deeply concerned about their spiritual state. John Pickett (1744-1803), a traveling dancing master, given to gambling, came in contact in North Carolina with the Separate Baptists and returned to Fauquier a changed man. He "talked to his neighbours about the concerns of their souls."⁴⁰ At the invitation of the group on the Shenandoah, he came sixty miles and preached to them for two days on vital and experimental religion. Ireland's doubts and uncertainty were dispelled, but he found it hard to give up the practice of infant baptism which he had been taught from childhood. "It pleased God," he said, "to give me to see that I must be a partaker of faith in Christ before I could be entitled to an ordinance of his instituting." The group decided to attach itself to the Separates as they "had the warmest preachers and the most fire among them. Although the ministry of both names were warm and zealous men." But there was no ordained minister of the Separates, living in Virginia, to baptize them or constitute them a church. When he learned of the mission of Garrard's party to the meeting of the Sandy Creek Association in North Carolina, Ireland set out to overtake them. This he did, after 150 miles of hard riding and the passage of the James River in a boat, just as they were beginning an evening meeting in Amelia.⁴¹

On the rest of the trip, Garrard and Walker discussed the grounds of his faith with Ireland who had adopted as his prin-

40. Edwards, *Virginia*. Semple, 412.

41. Ireland, 119, 136-8.

ciple that he "would take truth as a trust from no man." They insisted on his taking a share of the preaching at the meetings held on the way. At this meeting of the Association, Samuel Harris was ordained to the ministry so that the ordinances could be administered by him in Virginia. When the Association adjourned, the group went to Harris' home in Pittsylvania. After preaching, in which Ireland took his part, for three days and the greater part of the nights, for many people had come from great distances to listen to them, the church (Dan River) heard Ireland's experience and received him for baptism. This was administered by Harris and was followed by the signing of Ireland's credentials as an itinerant by the eleven ministers present.

Churches formed by the Separates

The following November (1769) the groups gathered by Pickett in Fauquier and by Ireland on the Shenandoah were constituted by Harris and Ireland as Carter's Run, the first church of the Separates in northern Virginia. Among the thirty-seven constituents were Joseph Holtzclaw who gave the land for the meeting house, Peter Hitt, Burr Harrison and Wm. McClannahan. By 1772 it had increased to 240 and many prominent families were represented in its membership.⁴²

In 1770 Falls Creek was constituted in Pittsylvania with thirty-seven members dismissed from Dan River. Samuel Harris was pastor and until a meeting house was built the church met at his home where he entertained them all.⁴³ That year Goldmine was constituted in Louisa as a consequence of preaching there by Saunders, Harris, Read, Lewis Craig and other young men.⁴⁴

42. Edwards, *Virginia*. Ireland, 155-7. Semple, 413. Kemper.

43. Edwards, *Virginia*. Falls Creek was dissolved in 1802 (MSS. Minutes of Roanoke Association, I, 191).

44. Semple, 165.

South River (Shenandoah), near the forks of the Shenandoah River in Frederick (now Warren) County, had been gathered chiefly by William Marshall (1735-1808), who was among the first fruits in Fauquier of the Separate Baptists.⁴⁵ As none of the preachers who labored in its bounds were ordained until later, Harris came 200 miles to administer baptism to 53 persons in the presence of "thousands who had never witnessed such a scene before." With Elijah Craig and John Waller he constituted the church.⁴⁶ In 1771 Culpeper (Fiery Run), which had been a branch of Carter's Run, was constituted in that part of Culpeper that is now Rappahannock County.⁴⁷

Amherst (Buffalo River, now Ebenezer), constituted in 1771, with twenty-seven members, was remarkable for holding itself bound to pay its minister 50 shillings a year. Other Separate churches were conscience bound against paying a salary. This church was a product of preaching by Harris and Dutton Lane with Thomas Hargate, an exhorter from Dan River who went into its organization. It had branches on Tick, Rockfish and Pedlar rivers.⁴⁸ The same year a church was constituted in Bedford with twenty-four members,⁴⁹ and the branch of Lower Spotsylvania planted by Christopher Clarke in Buckingham became an independent organization. Rane Chastain (1741-1823), a constituent member, was ordained the next year as its pastor.⁵⁰ County Line in Pittsylvania and Cub Creek in Charlotte, both branches of Falls Creek, and Sandy Creek in Amelia, a branch of Nottoway, were constituted in 1771.⁵¹

45. Marshall, uncle of the Chief Justice, was "a very zealous and successful preacher . . . of more warmth than wisdom, more grace than gifts." (Semple, 320.)

46. The name was changed to "Happy Creek." (Taylor, John, *Ten Churches*, 9, 10, 15.)

47. Edwards, *Virginia*.

48. Edwards, *Virginia*.

49. Edwards, *Virginia*.

50. Asplund (1794). Semple, 208. Clarke became a Quaker.

51. Edwards, *Virginia*. Asplund (1794). Semple, 232.

The First Separate Baptist Association in Virginia

All the churches of the Separates in Virginia and the Carolinas belonged to the Sandy Creek Association. At its meeting at Grassy Creek, North Carolina, in 1770 it was agreed unanimously to divide the Association into three bodies, one in each state. The cause of this division, according to Edwards, "was partly convenience, but chiefly a mistake which this association fell into, relative to their power and jurisdiction. They had carried matters so high as to leave hardly any power in particular churches, unfellowshipping ordinations, ministers and churches that acted independent of them."⁵² Benedict adds, "The good old Mr. Stearns, who was not wholly divested of those maxims which he had imbibed from the traditions of his fathers, is said to have been the principal promoter of this improper stretch of associational power, which, however, was soon abandoned by those, who, for a time, tampered with it to their embarrassment."⁵³

It was the custom of the Association, as it was of the churches, to act only with unanimity. If there was a single dissentient, they labored with him by argument. When argument failed they resorted to prayer, in which all joined. When this failed, they sometimes appointed the next day for fasting and prayer and to strive to bring all to be of one mind. The division of the Association was the only matter brought up during the three-day session on which they reached the unanimity that their custom required. Not even a moderator could be agreed upon.⁵⁴

The North Carolina association continued to be called Sandy Creek. The South Carolina churches formed the Congaree Association. Twelve of the Separate churches in Virginia sent delegates to an "occasional" (i.e., special) meeting held

52. Edwards, *North Carolina*, 399. Quoted by Benedict, II, 52.

53. Benedict, II, 53.

54. Semple, 46.

at Elijah Craig's meeting house in Orange in May, 1771, for organization of the Virginia association. Semple lists the churches, their delegates and membership:

CHURCHES	DELEGATES	MEMBERSHIP
Amelia (Nottoway)	Jeremiah Walker, David Ellington, John Williams	260
Amherst	Thomas Hargate, James Meneese	26
Bedford	William Lovell	29
Buckingham	Rane Chastain, Jr., William Johnson	52
Culpeper (Fiery Run)	John Morrow, Th. Peyton	21
Fauquier (Carter's Run)	Joseph Hotsclaw, James Weathers	148
Frederick (Shenandoah)	William Marshall, Reuben Pickett	159
Louisa (Goldmine)	James Chiles, David Thompson, Andrew Trebble	100
Orange (Rapid-ann or Blue Run)	Elijah Craig, George Twyman, Bartlet Bennet, George Eves	120
Pittsylvania (Falls Creek)	Samuel Harris, Jacob Metciff	62
Spotsylvania (Lower)	John Waller, John Burrus, Reuben Ford, William Webber	253
Spotsylvania (Upper)	Lewis Craig, Joseph Bledsoe, William Card, John Craig	105

These twelve churches located in eleven counties reported 420 received by baptism since the meeting of the Sandy Creek Association the previous October and a total of 1,335 members.⁵⁵ The organization was commonly known as the "Rapid-ann" or "Orange" Association, but was more properly called the "General Association of the Separate Baptists in Virginia."

Not represented was Dan River in Pittsylvania, reported "in distress." Blackwater in Bedford and Staunton in Pittsylvania remained in the Sandy Creek Association.⁵⁷

55. Semple, 49.

57. Paschal, 229, 233.

John Williams (1747-95) recorded in his Journal that he reached the Association Saturday in time to hear Hargate preach to a congregation of 1,200 people. He was followed by John Burrus, who "with a good deal of liberty, set the Christians all afire with the Love of God, the Assembly praising God with a loud voice" as John Waller, William Marshall and Elijah Craig exhorted.

"Then the delegates associated themselves." By a private poll Harris was elected moderator and Waller, clerk. Letters from the churches were read.

Sunday was given to preaching to a congregation estimated at between 4,000 and 5,000 people. William Webber (1747-1808) was followed by Walker; Lewis Craig exhorted. Then Harris preached, Craig exhorted and Marshall preached.

On Monday they fasted and proceeded to business in the meeting house. Lewis Craig, John Young (1739-1817), Nathaniel Saunders⁵⁸ and Reuben Pickett preached outside to the crowd of "about 1,000," and Williams, Lovell, Burrus and Joseph Craig to 500 on Tuesday, with a concluding exhortation by Bartlet Bennet.⁵⁹

The Association unanimously agreed that it had no power or authority to impose anything upon the churches, but that it act as an advisory council, provided that all matters brought before the Association for advice be determined by a majority voice.

With regard to ordination, which had previously been conducted at the meetings of the Sandy Creek Association by the ministers there assembled, it was agreed that both for pastors, chosen by the churches, and for itinerant ministers, an examination by as many neighboring ministers as could be called and the recommendation by his church of his doctrine and manner of life be required.

58. A "Regular."

59. Williams, *Journal*.

A query came from Amelia: "What are the terms of communion fixt in the word of God?" The answer was: "Fellowship in the same faith and order."⁶⁰

As to church covenants (in which statements of theological belief were commonly included) there was vigorous discussion, settled by agreement that each church "use its own liberty."⁶¹

Decided differences, which threatened to disrupt the Association, developed over two queries. The church in Amelia asked "whether any member who shall refuse to acknowledge himself obliged by the scriptures to observe the Sabbath should not be avoided as heretical?"

The other query was from Lower Spotsylvania: "Whether it is lawful and expedient for our ministers to obtain license from the civil law for only one or more meeting places; and so be restricted from that general license, given them by King Jesus, Mark 16th Ch., 15th and 16th verses?"

"This occasioned a great debate," wrote John Williams in his *Journal*, "and once I thought everyone that had obtained license would be absolutely censured but we agreed to refer it to the next association."⁶²

Separate Churches Multiply

When Dutton Lane preached in Lunenburg in 1758 Joseph Williams, a magistrate, ordered him not to return. But in 1768, Harris and Jeremiah Walker preached in the vicinity and baptized a number who united with Nottoway, the nearest church to them. In 1770 the Lunenburg County Court granted the petition of this Joseph Williams, Tscharnèr DeGraffenreidt, James Shelburne and other Protestant dissenters for a place of public worship on their land.⁶³ The next year 108 members of

60. Semple, 50-2.

61. Williams, *Journal*. Semple, 51.

62. Semple, 52. No account of the next meeting is known.

63. Lunenburg Order Book, Dec. 13, 1770.

Nottoway were dismissed to form Meherrin. Joseph Williams was a deacon and Jeremiah Walker was its pastor until the ordination in 1772 of John Williams, a prominent citizen and a former sheriff of the county. Meherrin became a mother of churches and gave to the early Virginia Baptists John Williams, James Shelburne (1738-1820), Elijah Baker (1742-98) and John King (1756-1820)—ministers of outstanding activities.⁶⁴

The branch of Nottoway in Dinwiddie where the Gospel had been carried by Harris, Chiles and Walker was constituted a church (Harper's) under Walker's care.⁶⁵

The seed sown in Cumberland by William Webber and Joseph Anthony, two young members of Lower Spotsylvania, sprang up in 1771 as a church of that name (called "Powhatan," after that county was cut off from Cumberland).

In the last months of that year William Farrar, Reuben Ford, William and Philip Webber, Augustin Eastin and Joseph Anthony, all exhorters, and ninety other members of Lower Spotsylvania, eleven of them Negroes, were constituted a church in Goochland (Nuckols). Reuben Ford (1742-1823), who had professed faith under the preaching of Whitefield and had exhorted before he was baptized by James Read in 1769, was ordained as its pastor. Edwards notes that "this church has suffered less than any in Virginia. The reason is that some of the gentry have joined it and others favor it."⁶⁶

In 1770 John Koontz, who lived near Front Royal and after his baptism in Fauquier had been preaching to his neighbors, visited his brother on Mill Creek near the South Fork of the Shenandoah. There he preached both in English and German to the settlers, who were largely Mennonites from the Rhine-

64. Semple, 225.

65. Burkitt & Read, 280, state that "about 1770" a group in Sussex became members of Harper's until Sappony was constituted in 1773.

66. Semple, 12, 108. Edwards gives his verbal encounter with "a number of colonels, captains and esquires, etc., who had met for public business" at the county seat.

land, and many were aroused. John Pickett and Lewis Craig came to preach and baptized the converts. Among the first of them was Martin Kaufman who soon after became a preacher. When physical attacks and beating did not deter Koontz from preaching, Mennonite ministers were brought from Pennsylvania to stem the tide. "They contended that Christians ought not to hold with going to war, with slavery, or with taking legal oaths; that these were fundamental points. Koontz replied that the Baptists, upon these points, left every man at discretion, wishing each to follow the dictates of his own conscience."⁶⁷

In 1772 a church of seventy members was constituted called "White House," from the stone building in which they met.⁶⁸ In a few years Koontz moved into the neighborhood and was ordained to its care.

The Preachers and the Persecutors

The young preachers "were no sooner captivated by the King of Zion than they immediately began to fight under his banner" without waiting for ordination, or in many cases

67. Semple, 187.

68. The White House, built for a fort in 1760, stands in Page County just north of the point where Route 211 (Lee Highway) crosses the Shenandoah. Kaufman's grave is nearby in the bend. The church later built the meeting house in the village of Hamburg and took the name "Mill Creek" from the stream crossing the highway.

Most of the members of White House took the Oath of Allegiance to the Continental Congress and many of them joined the Revolutionary army. This gave offense to some former Mennonites who broke off and formed a church pastored by Kaufman. It held to "universal provision and final perseverance" as well as opposition to oaths, arms bearing and slavery. In 1789 it made overtures to the Orange District Association but their differences were not reconciled. In 1793 a petition to the Legislature from "Martin Coffman, minister" and members of "the Separate and Independent Baptist Church" asked that they be exempt from bearing arms "but are willing to pay such fine as you shall think right for their privilege." (Original in Virginia State Library.) Because of their anti-slavery sentiments six families moved in 1801 to the "wilderness of Ohio" and founded the church at Pleasant Run in Fairfax County and others followed. After Kaufman died in 1805 his church disintegrated and its members dispersed. (Semple, 188-9. Benedict II, 261.)

even for an opportunity for baptism. "Animated by an ardent desire for the advancement of their Master's kingdom they sallied forth in every direction, spreading the tidings of peace and salvation." Most of them were unlearned in the schools "yet illumined by wisdom from above, they would defend and maintain the truth. They moved on steadily, undismayed by the hosts of Satan backed by the arm of civil authority. Magistrates and mobs, priests and sheriffs, courts and prisons all vainly combined to divert them from their object. He that was for them was greater than all that were against them."⁶⁹

Like the Regulars the Separate churches and ministers suffered from misrepresentation, personal mistreatment and mob violence. In Pittsylvania, Dan River Church "endured much persecution"⁷⁰ and Falls Creek met with great opposition.⁷¹ Amherst "rose into being against strong opposition from mobs and magistrates," by whom its pastor, Thomas Hargate, was taken into custody and forbidden to preach.⁷² Edwards notes that Louisa (Goldmine) had its "share of persecution," and that in Fauquier a mob broke into the meeting house at Carter's Run and tore the pulpit and the communion table in pieces. Its pastor, John Pickett, was "often insulted and abused," not only by the mob but by "others, whose births, fortunes and ranks in life ought to have deterred them from savage and brutal action."

In Culpeper the patrolers were let loose upon the number of Negroes in the large Sunday congregations. "The poor Negroes [were] flying in every direction, the patrolers seizing and whipping them."⁷³

69. Semple, 11-12.

70. Semple, 5.

71. Edwards, *Virginia*.

72. Edwards, *Virginia*.

73. Ireland, 135. The patrol was a mounted highway guard that arrested and punished Negroes found away from their homes without written passes from their owners.

Some of the preachers who came into Chesterfield were whipped by individuals.⁷⁴ John Koontz was beaten twice in Shenandoah as was Martin Kaufman who was mistaken for him. Thomas Waford, a layman of Goochland, was "severely beaten" when he accompanied Waller and Webber to Middlesex in 1771 and again, "when persecution ran high," was whipped severely.⁷⁵

Samuel Harris was attacked by a gang in Culpeper, and in Orange was pulled down from the place where he was preaching and hauled about by the hair of his head. In both cases, his friends rescued him in a general battle with his attackers, attended on both sides "with bloody noses, tattered garments, and disheveled hair in abundance."⁷⁶ "Colonel Harris did not suffer as many persecutions as some other Baptist preachers. Perhaps his bold, noble, yet humble manner dismayed the ferocious spirits of the opposers of religion."⁷⁷

In Caroline in the spring of 1771 as John Waller was holding worship out-of-doors, the minister of the parish (Moreton) and his clerk, with the sheriff, came to the place. Moreton rode up to the stage on which Waller stood and with his whip tumbled the leaves of the book as Waller was giving out the Psalm. When Waller began to pray, Moreton ran the end of his whip into Waller's mouth and the clerk pulled him down and dragged him to the sheriff who whipped him so violently that Waller was presently in a gore of blood. But sore and bloody as he was, Waller remounted the stage and preached "a most extraordinary sermon."⁷⁸ Waller gave an account of this to John Williams and others as they spent the night in Christopher Clarke's home on their way to the first meeting of the General Association in Orange in May, 1771. Williams

74. Semple, 207.

75. Semple, 18, 162.

76. Edwards, *Virginia*.

77. Semple, 383.

78. Edwards, *Virginia*.

recorded it in his Journal, adding that Waller "was asked if his nature did not interfere when whipped. He answered that the Lord stood by him and poured his love into his soul without measure so that he could scarcely feel the stripes for the love of God, rejoicing that he was worthy to suffer for his dear Lord and Master." At another time while he was preaching a huge fellow pulled him down and dragged him about by his hair. When another, as stout, ran to his rescue each grasped a hand and "between friend and foe Waller was like to lose both arms."⁷⁹

Edwards' Statistics

In Appendix IV of Edwards' "Materials" are tabulated statistics of all the Baptist churches in Virginia up to the year 1772 when his account closes. Including Great Bethel in Pennsylvania and Little Bay in North Carolina (both members of the Kettocton Association), there are fourteen churches of the Regulars listed, with eight additional meeting houses for their branches, and the names are given of fifteen ordained ministers and ten unordained assistants. For the Separates, twenty churches with twenty-one branches are listed and the names of eleven ministers with fifty-three assistants ("exhorters") are given.

The total number of members of both groups is put at 3,633 and families in attendance at 8,002. "Allowing five to a family," the "souls" hearing the message of the Baptists were estimated at more than 40,000.

79. Edwards, *Virginia*.

Imprisonments and Increase 1768 - 1777

THE first attempt to suppress the Separate preachers by legal process was taken against Lewis Craig early in his activities. He was fined by the Spotsylvania County court for preaching. "I thank you, gentlemen, for the honour you did me," said Craig to the grand jury that presented him. "While I was wicked and injurious, you took no note of me, but now having altered my course of life and endeavoring to reform my neighbors, you concern yourselves much about me." This arrow, which Craig shot at a venture, struck "Swearing Jack" Waller, one of the jury, a young man of good family but notorious as a gambler, for his profanity and for his fury towards the Baptists, whom he was active in presenting to the court as nuisances. "He began to consider the absurdity of his conduct in opposing the righteous and good by law and by his own practice."¹ He was baptized by James Read in 1767 and the next year was himself presented for preaching.

On June 4th, 1768, John Waller, Lewis Craig, James Chiles, James Read and William Marsh² were arested at their meeting house in Spotsylvania and hauled before three justices who bound each of them in the penalty of one thousand pounds to appear in court two days later. "However, the sheriff let them have their liberty without any other security than their word."³

1. Edwards, *Virginia*. Semple, 404.

2. Edwards gives the names of all five. Semple, on pp. 15 and 49, spells Chiles' name "Childs," but on p. 411, "Chiles," as do all other sources. Marsh was an exhorter from Falls Creek in Pittsylvania.

3. Edwards, *Virginia*.

At court they were arraigned as disturbers of the peace and on their trial were vehemently accused by the prosecuting attorney who said to the court: "May it please your worships, these men are great disturbers of the peace, they cannot meet a man upon the road, but they must ram a text of scripture down his throat."

Waller made their defense so effectively that the magistrates were puzzled how to dispose of them and offered to release them if they would promise to preach no more in the county for a year and a day. Apparently Read and Marsh, being far from home on an evangelizing trip and not expecting to return within that time, gave their promise or were dismissed without it. But Chiles, Craig and Waller, residents in the county and members of Upper Spotsylvania Church, refused and were "sent into close jail."

As they went through the streets of Fredericksburg from the Spotsylvania Court House to the county jail singing,

"Broad is the road that leads to death,"

they were regarded with awe by the populace.

While in prison they preached constantly through the grates to the people, who flocked to the jail windows in spite of the mob that by singing obscene songs and breeding riots did everything in its power to drive them away. Among the interested listeners was the clergyman of the parish who entered into a friendly conversation upon the subject of religion; and before he left them, offered to be their security if they chose to give bond.⁴

A month after their arrest, the court refused their petition for release.⁵ Craig was permitted to go to Williamsburg accompanied by Benjamin Waller, and appeal the decision. He was given a hearing by the acting governor, John Blair, and obtained from him a letter to the King's attorney in Spotsylvania:

4. Edwards, *Virginia*.

5. Spotsylvania County Order Book, July 4, 1768.

SIR,—I lately received a letter, signed by a good number of worthy gentlemen, who are not here, complaining of the Baptists, the particulars of their misbehaviour are not told, any further than their running into private houses, and making dissentions. Mr. Craig and Mr. Benjamin Waller are now with me, and deny the charge: they tell me they are willing to take the oaths, as others have: I told them I had consulted the attorney general, who is of opinion, that the general court only have a right to grant licenses, and therefore I referred them to the court: but, on their application to the attorney general, they brought me his letter, advising me to write to you.

That their petition was a matter of right, and that you may not molest these conscientious people, so long as they behave themselves in a manner becoming pious christians, and in obedience to the laws, till the court, when they intend to apply for license, and when the gentlemen, who complain, may make their objections, and be heard. The act of toleration (it being found by experience, that persecuting dissenters, increases their numbers), has given them a right to apply, in a proper manner, for licensed houses, for the worship of God, according to their consciences, and I persuade myself, the gentlemen will quietly overlook their meetings, till the Court. I am told, they administer the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, near the manner we do, and differ in nothing from our church, but in that of Baptism, and their renewing the ancient discipline; by which they have reformed some sinners, and brought them to be truly penitent: Nay, if a man of theirs is idle, and neglects to labour, and provide for his family as he ought, he incurs their censures, which have had good effects. If this be their behaviour, it were to be wished, we had some of it among us: But at least, I hope, all may remain quiet, till the Court.

I am, with great respects to the gentlemen, Sir,

Your humble servant,

JOHN BLAIR

Williamsburg, July 16, 1768.⁶

When the letter came to the attorney he would have nothing more to say in the case and the prisoners, who had been in jail for forty-three days, were discharged without any conditions.

6. Edwards, *Virginia*.

“After their discharge, which was regarded as a triumph, Waller, Craig and their compeers in the ministry resumed their labors with redoubled vigor, gathering fortitude from their sufferings; thanking God that they were counted worthy to suffer for Christ and his Gospel.”⁷

In Orange

In the adjoining county of Orange in July 1768, Allen Wyley, John Corbley, Elijah Craig and Thomas Chambers were brought before the court, “charged as vagrant and itinerant persons and for assembling themselves unlawfully at sundry times and places under the denomination of Anabaptists and for teaching and preaching schismatic doctrines,” and were found “guilty of a breach of good behaviour.” They were ordered to give bonds and securities for “good behaviour” until the 25th of October next or to be committed to jail until they did.⁸ Edwards says of Elijah Craig, “He was in gaol at Orange for a considerable time in 1768, preaching through the bars to the people, who resorted to the prison, till he was confined to the inner dungeon where there was no opening save a hole in the door through which he received his bread and water.”⁹ In his sketch of Potomac Church Edwards states that its assistant pastor, Allen Wyley, “has been in prison for some time at Orange for the testimony of Jesus.”

In Culpeper

In November 1769 James Ireland, on the way home from Fauquier, where he and Samuel Harris had constituted Carter’s Run Church, crossed into Culpeper to spend the night at Captain Thomas McClannahan’s. He had been there before to hear Pickett preach. Parson Meldrum, rector of the parish,

7. Semple, 16.

8. Orange Order Book, July 28, 1768.

9. Semple, 415-16.

who made it his practice to attend the appointments of the Baptist preachers to confute and denounce them, called Pickett "a schismatic, a broacher of false doctrines, who had held up damnable errors." Young Ireland engaged the parson, who was backed up by his friend, the magistrate, in a warm discussion and compelled him to admit that all that Pickett had preached was to be found in the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England, and to confess that to be true which he had just before called "damnable error."¹⁰ On this second visit to McClannahan's, Ireland was served notice that if he met his appointment to preach the next day, he would be arrested. He says, "I sat down and counted the cost. Freedom or prison? It admitted of no dispute. Having ventured all upon Christ, I determined to suffer all for him." Ireland preached and while praying was arrested and was asked for his authority. He replied, "The author of the Gospel." As he had not been commissioned by ecclesiastical authority, he was required to give security for his appearance in court. The eleven magistrates on the bench would not admit his defense, but ordered him to hold his tongue and let them hear no more of his "vile, pernicious, abhorrible, detestable, abominable, diabolical doctrines." They were determined to make an example of him and sent him to prison. The rabble surrounded the little jail, deluging him all night with oaths and abuse and showers of sticks and stones through the bars. "A very uncomfortable night," was his restrained comment.

Bad as were all eighteenth century jails, the one-room building in Culpeper where Ireland lay from November until April was of the worst, its keeper the most avaricious and heartless, and his persecutors the most outrageous. They abused him with the vilest epithets, reached through the bars to take hold of him, stripped and flogged the Negroes in his audience and practiced unmentionable obscenity to his face as he preached

10. Ireland, 130-1.

through the little iron gate. They filled the jail with fumes of burning sulphur and pepper, they exploded gun powder under it and formed a plot to poison him. He suffered from a scorching fever and his health was permanently injured.¹¹ He was not twenty-two, yet the high-spirited youth bore it all with courage, dignity and serenity. Friends near the Court House supplied him with food and fuel and paid the jailer's fee of four shillings and eight pence to visit him. His correspondence gave him much comfort.¹² A fellow prisoner, who at first threatened his life, became his devoted body-guard and protector. A period of spiritual despondence passed away and he had so strong a sense of the divine presence that he headed his letters, "From my Palace in Culpeper."¹³

In the month between his release on bail in April and his trial at the May term of court he rode to Williamsburg with the petition of a number of respected citizens asking for the privilege of a meeting house in which he might preach without molestation. It was received by the governor, Lord Botetourt, "with all the graces of a gentleman." He found that the clergy in the city were obstinately determined not to give him the examination prescribed for Protestant dissenters, but he obtained it from a parson in the county, and the desired license was granted. He produced it at his trial. "Never was a people so chagrined as the bench of magistrates." But they and his old opponent, the parson, were still determined to send him back to jail. A competent lawyer was engaged who informed the magistrates that they had prosecuted Ireland under laws repealed in England upon the accession of William and Mary seventy years before, and that they themselves were liable to prosecution for their illegal action. The confusion of the court

11. Ireland, 157-67.

12. A letter from David Thomas is copied in Ireland's "Life," 169.

13. The site of the jail is now that of the meeting house of the Culpeper Baptist Church. The lock and key of the jail are in the Virginia Baptist Historical Society.

was complete. The presiding justice picked up his hat and went out of doors. Another and another followed him until the bench was empty.¹⁴

The energy pent up during his imprisonment found an outlet in missionary journeys over a wide sweep of country from Chesapeake Bay westward to the Ohio, preaching often three times during the day as well as at night. Of eastern Virginia he says:

Opposition hindered me everywhere; one body of the congregation calling to the other to whip the fellow off the ground, fists would be drawn; sailors were brought from their vessels to take me out into the stream and give me a ducking. Public teachers would introduce controversies, principally on Baptism, which to their mortification, resulted in their congregations being convinced of the propriety of believing baptism by immersion.¹⁵

In Fauquier

In Fauquier in February, 1770, John Pickett, pastor of Carter's Run in that county, was brought into court and on his refusal to give security that he would not preach was remanded to jail, where he was confined for three months.¹⁶

In Chesterfield

In December, 1770, William Webber and Joseph Anthony, two young preachers, residents of Goochland and members of Lower Spotsylvania, not yet ordained, crossed the James River into Chesterfield on the invitation of some of the people of that county and preached. They were arrested on warrants "for misbehaviour by itinerant preaching" and put in jail. The Order Book records that when they were brought before the court in January:

14. Ireland, 178-80.

15. Ireland, 182.

16. Fauquier County Order Book, February 26, 1770. Semple, 413.

they offered to take oathes to his Majesties person and Government and Subscribe to the Test and be conformable as the law commonly called the Toleration Act requires, but the Court was of the opinion that their doing so in this County will not authorize them to preach as the said Act directs.

They were required to give security for "good behaviour" (i.e., that they would not preach in the county for a year and a day). "This they could not in conscience comply with and they continued in jail until March, preaching through the grates. Many people attended and many professed faith."¹⁷ "Such was the power of Anthony's ministry while in jail that it was judged the best policy to dismiss him." The jailer was directed to leave the door to their cell unlocked, that it might be reported that they had escaped, but they would not flee. The door was left open. Still they remained. To persuasions to escape they replied: "They have taken us openly, uncondemned, and have cast us into prison; and now do they cast us out privily? Nay, verily, but let them come themselves and fetch us out."¹⁸

The preachers generally claimed the same privileges that were enjoyed under the Toleration Act by the dissenters in England, and, so far as they could, they got licenses for individuals and meeting houses.¹⁹ But their applications were no longer acted on by the county courts and were referred to the General Court, which met in Williamsburg only twice a year. It consisted of the Governor and his Council. The Council, made up of the leading representatives of the office-holding aristocracy of the colony, was naturally inclined toward the repression of all innovations both in Church and State proceeding from the masses, and always showed itself more narrowly conservative than the Governor.²⁰ It alleged that the Toleration

17. Semple, 17.

18. Sketch of Anthony in *Virginia Baptist Ministers*, First Series.

19. Edwards, *Virginia*, Semple, 24.

20. McIlwaine, 52.

Act was not in force in Virginia, since it was never formally adopted by the House of Burgesses. It was difficult to get the required certificate of orthodox belief from a parson of the Established Church. Only one meeting house was licensed for a whole county.²¹

The preachers did not allow any of these obstacles to prevent them, licensed or unlicensed, from carrying their message in every direction, regardless of the consequences.²²

In Caroline

In June 1771 John Young "came into Caroline County Court and acknowledged that he preached the Gospel at Thomas Pittman's to a number of people, not having Episcopalian Ordination or being licensed as a dissenting preacher," and was committed to jail. On November 14, he was released by a writ of habeas corpus to appeal to the General Court at Williamsburg and his recognizance transferred to the attorney general.²³

In July 1771, in Caroline, "Bartholomew Choning, James Goolrich and Edward Herndon, being brought before the court for teaching and preaching the Gospel without having Episcopal Ordination or a license from the General Court, were remanded to the gaol "in default of their willingness to give security for their "good behaviour" for twelve months and a day.²⁴

21. A license for a Baptist meeting house in Richmond County was refused by the General Court because there was a Presbyterian meeting house already licensed in the county. (Fristoe, 73.)

22. They agreed with the statement of belief of John Smyth, leader until his death in 1612, of a group of English Baptist exiles in Holland: "That the magistrate is not by virtue of his office to meddle with religion or matters of conscience, to force or compel men to this or that form of religion or doctrine; but to leave the Christian religion free to every man's conscience . . . for Christ only is king and lawgiver of the church and conscience." (McGlothlin, 82.)

23. Caroline Order Book, 1770-2, pp. 211, 372. Semple, 119.

24. Order Book, 1770-2, p. 242.

At the same session "John Burrus came into court and acknowledged that he had preached the Gospel contrary to a license granted him by the General Court," (i.e., that he preached in other places than that specified in his license). He was committed to jail.²⁵

At the August session in 1771, Lewis Craig "by virtue of a warrant being committed to the gaol of the County, and now brought before the court, acknowledged that he had preached the Gospel contrary to a license given him by the General Court," and was "ordered back to the gaol" where he had been imprisoned on a magistrate's warrant since July 10.²⁶ Previous to his imprisonment, Craig had been carried before a magistrate in Caroline and had given bond not to preach in the county, "but feeling himself hampered by this measure, he thought it best to incur the penalty."²⁷ He remained in jail three months before he was removed to Williamsburg by a writ of habeas corpus for trial. There he was released on promise of good behaviour. He accepted on condition that preaching should not be construed a breach of his promise or a forfeiture of his recognizance. The court made no reply. He repeated it again. The court was silent as before. This silence he took for consent and departed.²⁸

In Middlesex

Religious interest in Middlesex developed in 1769 from a visit to his relatives by William Mullins, a former resident, then living in Amelia. Here he had become a member of Nottoway Church. The next year, John Waller and John Burrus came to the county and preached for three days to great crowds. Popu-

25. Order Book, 1770-2, p. 242. Burrus was assistant to Waller at Lower Spotsylvania. He never was ordained. (Semple, 161.)

26. Order Book, 1770-2, p. 255.

27. Semple, 120. "When Mr. Craig went to jail he found Herndon and B. Choning there, who being nothing more than exhorters were soon after turned out."

28. Edwards says, "I believe they were tired of him."

lar opinion was sharply divided. A magistrate attempted to pull Waller off the stand. The clergyman of the parish prevented it. Five were baptized and became an "arm" of Lower Spotsylvania, the nearest church to them. Led by James Greenwood (1749-1813), they held public meetings by day and night. Many were converted and awaited the coming of an ordained minister to baptize them.²⁹ In May, 1771, the grand jury presented Robert Ware, James Mackan and others for wilfully absenting themselves from the parish church. At the session of the county court in June, a petition by Robert Ware and eleven others that they be granted "a place for the public worship of the dissenters at James Mackan's according to Law" was rejected, "the Court being of opinion they have no authority to appoint such place."³⁰

On August 10, Waller accompanied by William Webber and Thomas Wafford arrived in the upper end of Middlesex to look after these members of his flock. What happened is told by him in a letter written two days later:

Urbanna Prison, Middlesex County, August 12, 1771.

Dear Brother in the Lord,

At a meeting which was held at brother McCain's, in this county, last Saturday, whilst brother William Webber was addressing the congregation from James II; 18, there came running towards him, in a furious rage, Captain James Montague, a magistrate of the county, followed by the parson of the parish, and several others, who seemed greatly exasperated. The magistrate, and another, took hold of brother Webber, and dragging him from the stage, delivered him, with brethren Wafford, Robert Ware, Richard Falkner, James Greenwood and myself, into custody, and commanded that we should be brought before him for trial. Brother Wafford was severely scourged, and brother Henry Street received one lash, from one of the persecutors, who was prevented from proceeding to farther violence by his companions; to

29. Semple, 13.

30. Middlesex County Order Book, 1769-72, pp. 258, 376. Original petition in Virginia Baptist Historical Society.

be short, I may inform you that we were carried before the above magistrate, who, with the parson and some others, carried us, one by one, into a room, and examined our pockets and wallets for fire-arms, &c., charging us with carrying on a mutiny against the authority of the land. Finding none, we were asked if we had license to preach in that county; and learning we had not, it was required of us to give bond and security not to preach any more in the county, which we modestly refused to do, whereupon, after dismissing brother Wafford, with a charge to make his escape out of the county by twelve o'clock the next day on pain of imprisonment, and dismissing brother Falkner, the rest of us were delivered to the sheriff, and sent to close jail, with a charge not to allow us to walk in the air until court day. Blessed be God, the sheriff and jailor have treated us with as much kindness as could have been expected from strangers. May the Lord reward them for it! Yesterday we had a large number of people to hear us preach; and among others, many of the great ones of the land, who behaved well, while one of us discoursed on the new birth. We find the Lord gracious and kind to us beyond expression in our afflictions. We cannot tell how long we shall be kept in bonds; we therefore beseech, dear brother, that you and the church supplicate night and day for us, our benefactors and our persecutors.

I have also to inform you that six of our brethren are confined in Caroline jail, viz., brethren Lewis Craig, John Burrus, John Young, Edward Herndon, James Goodrick and Bartholomew Cheming. The most dreadful threatenings are raised in the neighboring counties against the Lord's faithful and humble followers. Excuse haste. Adieu.

JOHN WALLER.³¹

The warrant for their arrest and the mittimus for their committal to jail, both dated August 10th, were drawn with care and set forth in full the charges against them. The latter reads:

Middlesex ss:

James Montague one of his Majesty's Justices of the Peace of the said County.

To the Sheriff or Keeper of the Gaol of the County aforesaid.

I send you herewith the Bodys of John Waller, Robert Ware, James Greenwood and William Webber taken this day and brought before

31. *Religious Herald*, January 18, 1828.

me, who stand charged with unlawfully assembling themselves at the house of James McKan in this County and taking upon themselves to Teach or Preach the Gospel under the pretence of the exercise of Religion in other manner than according to the Litturgy of the Church of England, they not having Episcopal Ordination to Teach or preach the same according to the Canons of the said Church of England and not having, They professing themselves to be Protestant Teachers or Preachers dissenting from the said Church of England, Justified themselves as such According to the directions of an Act of the Parliament of England made in the first year of King William and Queen Mary Intituled an Act for exempting Their Majestys' Protestant Subjects dissenting from the s'd Church of England, from the Penalties of certain Laws, and for labouring to persuade many Persons in Communion of the Church of England to dissent from the same and for raising factions in the minds of his Majesty's Subjects contrary to the Laws of this Colony and against the Peace of our Lord, his Crown and Dignity;

They, the said John Waller, Robert Ware, James Greenwood and William Webber, upon their trial and examination by me had and taken, declare they have no Power or authority for which they stand charged, but from above, Therefore I require you to receive them into your Custody and them safely keep in the Gaol of the said County until they shall be discharged by due course of Law.

Given under my hand and Seal this 10th day of August 1771.

JAMES MONTAGUE (seal)³²

They gave notice that they would preach every Wednesday and Sunday from the windows and many came to hear them, despite the beating of a drum and other means employed by the mob to silence them.³³

On August 26th they were brought into the county court at Urbanna and each of them was required to give bond that he would not preach in the county for twelve months. They refused and were remanded to prison and orders given that they be fed on bread and water. For four days, they had nothing else and not enough bread. Then friends found it out and they

32. Original in Virginia Baptist Historical Society.

33. Edwards, *Virginia*. Semple, 18.

were furnished so plentifully that they bestowed their bounty on the poor of the town. On September 10th, they were allowed the use of the prison bounds³⁴ though frequently they had to go into the jail to escape persecutors. The hearts of the people were opened daily. The rich sent many presents to alleviate their confinement. Webber fell sick and Waller sent a letter to one of the justices who had convicted them:

Urb'a Prison, Sept. 20th, 1771.

Dr sir

Hoping that in your great clemency, you will when truly informed, commiserate the case, of one of my poor Bro. Prisoners has caused me, to use this freedom, of writing to you.

My bro. Webber now in prison, is in a very low state of health, & without divine interposition, must I think, in a few days, launch off the shores of mortality, he is a young man, who when at home, lives with his mother in Goochland, upwards of 100 miles from this I judge: & the reason of his coming down, into this County to preach, was this, The ministers that came with me before, are & has been for some time, in Caroline prison, for the very same thing that I am here; & before I left home, I was very sick, & pressed on this young man to come with me, to assist me in preaching at my meetings, thro; Caroline, K. & Queen & into this County; he had just begun to preach, as the Gent. came who took us up, & he had finish'd his discourse, when he was pull'd off the stage, he is, as well as myself, afraid to sign any Bond, not to preach, for fear of sinning against God; but it is more than probable, if he had now his liberty, that he would never be under obligations of coming into this County again, for he has not the care of a Church here, as I have, therefore I humbly hope, as you are a Gent. in great power, and much esteem in your County, you will please to procure him, his liberty to return home, to his friends to nurse him—

To

MR. JAMES MILLS
Urbanna.³⁵

I am yr. Friend

JOHN WALLER JR.

34. The prison bounds embraced an area about the jail where prisoners, not committed for treason or felony, had liberty, on giving security. It was chiefly for the benefit of persons imprisoned for debts.

35. Original in Virginia Baptist Historical Society.

Webber's illness excited the sympathy of their friends in a high degree. They paid him great attention and drew up a petition to the county court asking:

That whereas your worships made an order last Court for the Baptist Preachers now in our Prison Bounds to enter into Recognizance not to preach or teach in the County for six months under Certain penalties and they being Conscientious and fearing God Could not Consent to the said Conditions and now are bereft of the Opportunity of soliciting the depending General court for license, if your Worships should think it Duty for them so to do before Our Legislators shall Redress the Grievances of Dissenters by making a law for them to be guided by.

We therefore pray your Worships would Reconsider their Case, supercede the aforesaid Order, and release them from their imprisonment to Return home to their Distressed Families.³⁶

This was presented at the next session on September 26th and the prisoners were liberated. They had been thirty days in close confinement and sixteen days in the bounds. "The persecutors found that the imprisonment of the preachers tended rather to a furtherance of the Gospel, so that their enemies became desirous to be rid of them."³⁷

Discussion in the Gazette

These imprisonments in Caroline and Middlesex attracted wider than local attention. An "Address to the AnaBaptists imprisoned in Caroline County, August 8, 1771," was published in the *Virginia Gazette*.³⁸ In more than two thousand words its author (a lawyer, probably the attorney-general) endeavored to explain the reason and the legality of the proceedings against them. He justified their commitment on the need of:

36. Original in Virginia Baptist Historical Society.

37. Semple, 19. The next year Glebe Landing was constituted in Middlesex, as was Lower King and Queen ("Wares").

38. February 20, 1772.

. . . a *religious* as well as a *civil* establishment, not only because their Union has ever been found necessary to support Government, but that a State could not be expected to thrive which should seem to rely on her own Strength, without endeavouring to Conciliate the Divine Favor by establishing modes of Piety and Devotion. To these religious Establishments it becomes the duty of every good Member of Society to submit; and an opposition to them must be considered as Heresy and Schism and a breach of the Laws.

He alleged:

. . . a few of the many Instances in which your Doctrines and Practices tend to disturb, if not to sap, the very Foundations of Society, and will fully justify the Proceedings against you.

He cited the lengthy series of acts against non-conformity, beginning with a statute of Elizabeth. He stated that he was one of the few lawyers who thought that dissenters were entitled to the benefit of the Act of Toleration, provided they complied with its terms. Since no authority was set up for its administration, that belonged to the General Court which had jurisdiction over all persons and causes.³⁹

In the *Gazette* for August 22, 1771, is an article signed "Timoleon," in answer to the opinion that the Act of Toleration did not extend to the Colonies, and in defense of the Baptist position. He said:

. . . If the Dissenters have not religious Privileges allowed to them by Law, neither are they liable to be punished by any Law for their religious Opinions or Manner of Worship, unless they expose themselves in the Use or Exercise of them, to penal Laws never intended to affect or regulate either, which the most imprudent of them have not yet done. It may be asked then, by what Authority have some dissenting Teachers been imprisoned in this Province, and very lately in the

39. In full in Little, 255-62. This question of the application of the Act of Toleration had been argued in 1748 before the General Court by the noted Presbyterian minister, Samuel Davies. In 1752 he received a favorable opinion from the attorney-general of England. This had little influence with the General Court which claimed entire freedom in interpreting the Act as a law of Virginia (McIlwaine, 54, 58).

County of Middlesex? To allow a Magistrate more Power than the Law gives him is making him a Tyrant. Is attempting to make the Ignorant and Wicked wiser and better a Breach of any Law? The Magistrate should approve of such Attempts, as there is great Need of both. But perhaps the Men he committed were badly qualified for the Business. They might be so; but had he a Right to imprison them for that? It will perhaps be alleged that they exhorted or preached in an unlicensed Place; but if the Law of Toleration does not extend here, which is the prevailing Opinion, by what Law were they obliged to have any license? If there be no such Law, how could they be shut up in a close Prison for disobeying it?

Many will scarcely believe that Society can subsist on any Foundation but a Sameness of Religion; and think of consequence, every Man an Enemy to the State who objects to an Article of the established Faith. Such People should inform themselves better of the Tendency of religious Opinion that differs from their own, and of the natural Right of Mankind, and be no longer so weak and illiberal. A man may soon be convinced that there are flourishing and happy Governments where the Subjects, though of every Denomination, yet live in Harmony. True Liberty of Conscience is the sacred Property of every Man, which none can take from him without being guilty of Sacrilege and Tyranny.⁴⁰

Patrick Henry

The Baptists found an able advocate in Patrick Henry. "Being always the friend of liberty, he only needed to be informed of their oppression. Without hesitation he stepped forward to their release."⁴¹ A letter from Judge Spencer Roane to William Wirt, Henry's biographer, states that, "Mr. [Edmund] Pendleton, on the bench of Caroline court, justified the imprisonment of several Baptist preachers, who were defended by Mr. Henry, on the heinous charge of worshipping God according to the dictates of their own consciences."⁴²

40. In full in Little, 277-9.

41. Semple, 24.

42. *Patrick Henry*, by William Wirt Henry, I: 119. For Henry's reputed speech in Spotsylvania, see Little, 106-126.

In Chesterfield

In May, 1772, Augustine Eastin was committed to jail in Chesterfield "having practiced preaching as a Baptist, not having a license." The Court in June adjudged this "a breach of good behaviour" and required a bond which he would not give.⁴³ To interfere with his preaching from the window to the people outside, the presiding magistrate, Archibald Cary, had the prison surrounded by a high enclosure.⁴⁴

In King and Queen

In August, 1772, James Greenwood and William Lovell,⁴⁵ while preaching in King and Queen County near the present site of the Bruington meeting house, were arrested on a warrant and immediately conveyed to prison, singing "Life is the time to serve the Lord." They were allowed the bounds and "received the most unbounded kindness from Mr. Harwood, the jailer, and his lady. They preached regularly while in prison and to much purpose." After sixteen days the court met and "they were discharged upon giving bond merely for good behaviour," —preaching not included.⁴⁶

In Caroline

On the twelfth of August, 1772, in Caroline, two laymen, James Ware and James Pitman, were imprisoned sixteen days for having preaching in their houses. They were permitted the prison bounds on securities, given by William Taliaferro and Christopher Singleton, that they would not depart out of them.

43. Chesterfield Order Book, V: 109. Edwards, *Virginia*. Semple, 207. Eastin was an "exhorter" in Goochland Church.

44. Edwards, *Virginia*.

45. William Lovell was delegate from "Bedford" to the first meeting of the Separate Association in 1771 (Semple, 49).

46. Semple, 22. The King and Queen records were destroyed when the court house was burned in 1828.

They offered to give bond for good behavior generally, but were unwilling to promise that they would not permit preaching in their houses in particular. This at first was refused them, but afterwards was acceded to and they were discharged.⁴⁷

A month later John Waller was brought before the Caroline Court" for preaching at Henry Goodloe's" and "ordered that he remain in the custody of the Sheriff until he give security for good behaviour for a year and a day."⁴⁸

In Chesterfield

On May 15, 1773, on a warrant issued by Archibald Cary, the persistent prosecutor of Baptist ministers coming to preach in Chesterfield, John Tanner from North Carolina, described as "an itinerant person calling himself an anaBaptist preacher," was arrested and gave bond for his appearance in court.⁴⁹ At the meeting of the court in June, Tanner and John Weatherford were committed to the Chesterfield jail until they should give bond that they would not preach in the county.⁵⁰ Tanner, being from outside the state, was probably let out earlier but Weatherford's confinement continued. The high enclosure that Cary had erected kept him from the view of the people outside, but did not prevent their hearing his strong voice when a handkerchief raised on a pole signaled that they were ready to listen.⁵¹ Nine persons who had been converted were baptized by Rane Chastain, whom Weatherford had asked to come from Buckingham for that purpose. On Chastain's arrival in Chesterfield he was ordered, on pain of imprisonment, to leave the county but he refused to go.⁵²

47. Caroline Order Book, 1772-6, p. 91. Semple, 120.

48. Order Book, 1772-6, p. 107. There is no further record.

49. Original bond in Chesterfield County Clerk's office. For Tanner see Burkitt and Read, 55.

50. Chesterfield Order Book, V, 280. Semple, 207.

51. Sketch of Weatherford in *Virginia Baptist Ministers*, Series I.

52. Sketch of Chastain in *Virginia Baptist Ministers*, Series I.

In August, Jeremiah Walker was committed.⁵³ The court on September 3, having been informed that Jeremiah Walker and John Weatherford had been "admitted to the liberty of the prison rules," ordered them re-committed.⁵⁴ After five months, Weatherford was liberated by an order secured through the aid of Patrick Henry by whose influence he had been allowed the bounds. When the jailer refused to release him until he paid the jail fees, a considerable sum, more than Weatherford could raise, Henry paid them but concealed the fact. Weatherford did not discover this until many years afterwards.⁵⁵

Walker pleaded his cause under the Act of Toleration so conclusively that he was discharged.⁵⁶

In the face of arrest John Williams and William Webber came into Chesterfield and on August 23, 1773, constituted Chesterfield Church with twenty members dismissed for that purpose from the church in Cumberland. Its leader was Eleazer Clay (1744-1836) who became its pastor. Clay had been active since his baptism two years earlier. "He was very attentive to the preachers who were imprisoned in Chesterfield."⁵⁷ As he was a rich and socially prominent citizen of the county the authorities did not interfere with him.⁵⁸

In Fairfax

While Jeremiah Moore was preaching in Fairfax County in 1773 a magistrate, attended by the rector of the parish, had him arrested and ordered to prison. The mittimus read: "I send you herewith the body of Jeremiah Moore, who is a

53. Order Book, V, 306. Semple, 387.

54. Order Book, V, 320.

55. Henry, I, 118. L. A. Alderson in *Religious Herald*, January 12, 1871.

56. Burkitt and Read, 265.

57. Semple, 206.

58. He was "reputed worth 100 thousand dollars" (Benedict, II; 459). His brother, John Clay, father of the statesman, Henry Clay, and Richard Cheatham were securities for John Tanner's appearance in Chesterfield Court and were constituent members of Chesterfield Church. John Clay planted Black Creek in Hanover in 1777. (Semple, 90.)

preacher of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and also a stroller." At his trial he was told by the judge, "You shall lie in jail until you rot," but he escaped imprisonment by obtaining legal license for places of preaching.⁵⁹

In Culpeper

On August 21, 1773, Nathaniel Saunders, who had been for five years pastor of Mountain Run in Orange, and William McClannahan,⁶⁰ assistant to John Pickett at Carter's Run in Fauquier, were arrested in Culpeper County on a warrant issued that day, charging that they did "Teach & Preach Contrary to the Laws & usages of the Kingdom of Great Britain, raising Sedition & Stirring up Strife amongst his Majestie's Liege People." Bond for Saunders' appearance in court was given by Thomas Porter and John Rice. On September 20, he was committed to jail on his refusal to give bond that he would "neither teach, preach, nor exhort for one year except in his licensed meeting house."⁶¹

Saunders, a few days later, received a letter from his father in the ministry:

To Nathaniel Saunders, a Minister of Christ, now in prison in Culpeper for preaching the Gospel there, by Mr. Eaton:

Dear Brother,

I hear you are put in prison for preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Perhaps you may think it hard. But O, what honor has the Lord put upon you! I think you may be willing to suffer death now, seeing you are counted worthy to enter a dungeon for your Master's sake. Hold out, my dear brother! Remember your Master—your royal, heavenly, divine Master—was nailed to a cursed tree for us. O, to suffer for him

59. Semple, 309. Moore's Enquiry, 26.

60. "A most robust man and has been a mighty buffer" (Edwards, *Virginia*). McClannahan commanded a company in the army of the Revolution, to which he preached. (Howe, 238).

61. The original warrant, bond and order of the Court in 1773 and a letter from William Bradley to Saunders in 1770, threatening him with arrest if he preached in Culpeper, are in the Virginia Baptist Historical Society.

is glory in the bud! O, let it never be said that a Baptist minister of Virginia ever wronged his conscience to get liberty, not to please God, but himself! O, your imprisonment (which I am satisfied is not from any rash proceedings of your own) is not a punishment, but a glory! "If you suffer with Him you shall also reign with Him."

Dear brother, the bearer is waiting or I should have enlarged. This is only to let you know that I can pray for you with great freedom. Give my kind love to your fellow-prisoner, though I know him not. I hope he is a dear child of God. Pray for me, for I need it. I remain, dear brother,

Yours in our dear Lord Jesus,

DAVID THOMAS

Fauquier, September 26, 1773.

N.B. Let me hear from you the first opportunity.⁶²

As the Culpeper order books prior to 1798 have disappeared no official record exists of Saunders' "fellow prisoner," McClannahan, except his inclusion on the warrant with Saunders.

In Orange

On October 23, 1773, Joseph Spencer was brought before the court of Orange County for "teaching and preaching the Gospel as a Baptist, not having license," and was given the choice of bonding himself not to preach until he obtained the license, which he knew to be most difficult, or going to jail, which he did. He was allowed the bounds on giving William Morton and Jonathan Davis as security. A month later he was given "leave to live in the Court House."⁶³

In a letter of January 24, 1774, James Madison, writing from his home in Orange, Virginia, to William Bradford, Jr., of Philadelphia, says:

I have nothing to brag of as to the state and liberty of my country. Poverty and luxury prevail among all sorts; pride, ignorance and knavery among the priesthood, and vice and wickedness among the

62. Copied in *Religious Herald*, October 30, 1856, from original sent by his grandson, Francis J. Saunders, to William Sands.

63. Orange Order Book, 1769-77, pp. 287, 295, 299.

laity. This is bad enough; but it is not the worst I have to tell you. That diabolical, hell-conceived principle of persecution rages among some, and, to their eternal infamy, the clergy can furnish their quota of imps for such business. There are at this time in the adjacent country not less than five or six well-meaning men in close jail for publishing their religious sentiments, which, in the main, are very orthodox. I have neither patience to hear, talk, or think of anything relative to this matter; for I have squabbled and scolded, abused and ridiculed, so long about it, to little purpose, that I am without common patience. So I must beg you to pity me, and pray for liberty of conscience to all.⁶⁴

In Chesterfield

The seventh preacher imprisoned in Chesterfield was David Tinsley (1749-1801), pastor of the church in the adjoining county of Cumberland, who was convicted on February 4, 1774, by the county court "of having assembled & preached to the people at sundry times & places in the County as a Baptist preacher."⁶⁵ "This was in the depth of winter. His condition appears to have been painful in the extreme. Not content with sundering him from his friends and placing him in a dungeon, other attempts were made to annoy and distress him. The suffocating effects of burning tobacco and red pepper were applied to the door and window in his cell." His confinement lasted four months and sixteen days. He preached through the barred window while "all around the jail the crowded assembly would stand; some weeping and others rejoicing, as they received the word of truth."⁶⁶

In Essex

On March 13, 1774, in Essex, John Waller, John Shackelford (1750-1829), Robert Ware and Ivison Lewis (1741-1815), who had come into the county and that day had constituted Piscataway Church (since 1856, "Mount Zion"), were arrested

64. Hunt, *Writings of James Madison*, I, 21.

65. Chesterfield Order Book, V, 389. Semple, 207.

66. Taylor, Jas. B., *Virginia Baptist Ministers*, Series II, 101.

“for preaching and expounding the scriptures contrary to the law.” Lewis, who had not preached, was dismissed and the others kept in close confinement until the court met on the 21st. In the jail they preached twice a week, read a good deal, prayed without ceasing and were often joined in their devotions, morning, noon and night, by visitors, to whom they “gave much Godly advice.” When the court imposed the usual sentence, Ware and Shackelford gave bond for “good behaviour twelve months,” with Samuel Gresham, John Sorrell (1754-1830), John Goode and Thomas Upshaw as their securities. “Waller, being always doubtful of the propriety of giving any bond whatever, determined to go back to jail,” where he was “scoffed and persecuted by his enemies and locked up with a set of drunken and profane wretches. After fourteen days he gained his own consent to give bond and go home.”⁶⁷

In Culpeper

Semple records without dates the imprisonments in Culpeper of John Corbley, “for a considerable time,”⁶⁸ of Thomas Ammon, a ministerial son of Crooked Run,⁶⁹ of Elijah Craig, who “was taken out of the pulpit”;⁷⁰ of Thomas Maxfield⁷¹ for exhorting, of Adam Banks, for praying in the private house of John Delaney, and of Delaney, who was not a Baptist, for permitting it.⁷² Semple tells also of Elijah Craig’s being taken

67. Essex Order Book, No. 29, pp. 195-6. Semple, 22-3. The court house building in which they were tried is now incorporated in the meeting house of Beale Memorial Baptist Church in Tappahannock. The jail is now occupied by the Woman’s Club of Essex County. Gresham was Clerk of Upper King and Queen Baptist Church, organized that year (Minute Book). This was the fourth county in which Waller was imprisoned—in all for 113 days. (Semple, 410.)

68. Semple, 428.

69. Semple, 176.

70. Semple, 180.

71. Or “Maxwell.” (Semple, 180. Little, 422.)

72. Semple, 180.

by the sheriff, when at his plough, and carried before three magistrates of Culpeper.

They, without hearing arguments pro, or con, ordered him to jail. At court, he, with others, was arraigned. One of the lawyers told the court, they had better discharge them; for that oppressing them, would rather advance, than retard them. He said, that they were like a bed of camomile; the more they were trod, the more they would spread. The court thought otherwise, and determined to imprison them. Some of the court were of opinion that they ought to be confined in a close dungeon: but the majority were for giving them the bounds. Mr. Craig says they were fed on rye bread and water, to the injury of their health. After staying there one month, preaching to all who came, he gave bond for good behaviour, and came out.⁷³

To this authenticated list of prisoners in Culpeper, tradition insists that the name of Anderson Moffett (1743-1835) should be added.⁷⁴

In Accomack

There are no definite records of imprisonments after 1774, with the exception of that of Elijah Baker in Accomack in 1778. Sometimes, as probably in the cases in Essex, bonds would be given when there was reason to believe that suits would not be brought upon their violation. John Leland (1754-1838) knew of "but one such suit and that was dismissed."⁷⁵

These imprisonments of more than thirty individuals in the jails of nine counties so far from arresting the Baptist movement had accelerated it by arousing sympathy for the prisoners, by kindling interest in their message and by awakening understanding and appreciation of their insistence on unrestrained exercise of freedom of belief in religion and liberty to preach the Gospel to every creature.

73. Semple, 415.

74. Little, 428.

75. *The Virginia Chronicle in Writings of John Leland*, 106.

Churches Multiply

When the imprisonments began in 1768 there were not more than four churches of the Separates south of James River, and but one on the north side.⁷⁶

In May, 1771, at the first meeting of the Separate General Association, there were delegates from twelve churches, four south and eight north of James River, with a total membership of 1,335.⁷⁷

In May, 1773, letters and delegates were received from thirty-four churches having 3,195 members, 506 received in the six months previous. For greater convenience the Association divided into two districts, one north and one south of James River. The joint meeting of the two district associations continued to be called the "General Association."⁷⁸

In May, 1774, the Northern District received letters from twenty-four churches with 1,921 members and the Southern District had letters from twenty-seven churches, reporting 2,033 members.⁷⁹

By the end of 1774 there were churches of Separates in twenty-eight of the sixty counties of Virginia, including every one in which Baptists had been imprisoned.

The Regulars too were increasing and had spread over the upper Northern Neck.⁸⁰ Fithian wrote in his Journal for March 6, 1774:

Mr. Lane the other Day informed me that the Anabaptists in Loudoun County are growing very numerous; and seem to be increasing in affluence; and, as he thinks, quite destroying pleasure in that country; for they encourage ardent Pray'r; strong and constant faith, and an intire Banishment of Gaming, Dancing, and Sabbath-Day Diversions.

76. Semple, 25.

77. Semple, 49.

78. Semple, 54-55.

79. Semple, 56-57.

80. Semple, 295.

In 1773, the seventeen churches of the Kettocton Association reported 270 baptisms and 1,050 members. Two years later there were twenty-three churches with 1,349 members.⁸¹

For these multiplying Baptists William Rind in 1773 printed and sold in Williamsburg:

Hymns and Spiritual Songs, I On Baptism, II On the Lord's Supper, III On Various Occasions.⁸²

The meeting in May, 1773 of the General Association was a clearing house for discussion of questions of doctrine, organization, practice and discipline.⁸³

The following queries are recorded in the minutes:

"Is the laying on of hands upon baptized members, merely as such, a Gospel ordinance?" The Association answered that "the churches are left at their liberty to act as they think best."

"Is it agreeable to Scripture for an unmarried man to take the care of a church?" The Association answered, "Yes."

"Is it lawful to receive a member into fellowship who is married to his [deceased] wife's sister?" The Association answered, "No."⁸⁴

The majority agreed that ministers should be ordained only for the care of particular churches and not "merely as ministers."

Samuel Harris had continued as moderator and John Waller as clerk, and when the association divided in 1774 into two districts Harris was elected moderator in each. John Waller was elected clerk for the Northern and John Williams for the Southern. At the meeting of the latter in May, 1774, letters were received from preachers confined in prison, particularly

81. Semple, 301.

82. Evans' *American Bibliography*, IV, No. 12,660. This was reprinted from "the first hymn book for the Baptist denomination made in this country," published at Newport Rhode Island, 1766. (Evans, IV, No. 10,233.)

83. Semple, 55.

84. This reply was in accord with the civil law in England.

from David Tinsley, then in Chesterfield jail. "The hearts of their brethren were affected at their sufferings, in consequence of which, it was agreed to raise contributions for their aid." It was "agreed to set apart the second and third Saturdays in June, as public fast days, in behalf of our poor blind persecutors, and for the releasement of our brethren."⁸⁵

The question of the adoption of a confession of faith was agitated in the session of the Northern District, which decided "that each church might exercise her own discretion, in adopting the confession of faith, or not."⁸⁶

Apostles

In both districts there was warm discussion at the spring and fall meetings in 1774, and in the interval between, as to the continued existence of the office of apostle, mentioned in Ephesians, IV: 11. Jeremiah Walker first agitated it and was supported by most of the preachers of popular talents "not without suspicion of ambition." The opposition was led by Reuben Ford, followed by a number in the Northern District. Both prepared pamphlets that were read at the session of the Southern District, which, almost unanimously, decided to establish the office and unanimously elected Samuel Harris to fill it. "His work was to pervade the churches; to do, or at least to see to, the work of ordination, and to set in order things that were wanting and make report to the next association." On a day set aside as a fast day he was ordained. "Waller gave a public charge, the hands of every ordained minister were laid on him and the whole association gave him the right hand of fellowship."

The Northern District elected John Waller and Elijah Craig "apostles" for that side of the James. This experiment in the establishment of bishoprics lasted only until the next meetings

85. Semple, 56.

86. Semple, 57.

of the associations when the "apostles" made discouraging reports and it was agreed that this office "did not belong to ordinary times."⁸⁷

Discord and Reconciliation

The two district associations met together in May, 1775. As usual, Harris was moderator. Both Waller and Williams were elected clerks. The first query to come up was: "Is salvation, by Christ, made possible for every individual of the human race?"

The debate on this query took up the whole of Monday. Every thinking man in the association felt himself seriously interested. Most of them spoke to it, more or less. The weight of talents and of influence seems to have been on the Arminian side. Samuel Harris, Jeremiah Walker, John Waller, and many other distinguished preachers, stood forward, and zealously, as well as ably, supported the argument in favour of universal provision.

Talents and ingenuity were not wanting on the other side. Wm. Murphy, John Williams and E. Craig, stood foremost in favour of a Calvinistic solution. . . . These, supported by truth, or at least by the more generally received opinion, among the Baptists, obtained, after a long and animated debate, a small majority. This decision was, on Monday afternoon, immediately before an adjournment. That evening, the Arminian party holding a consultation, determined to bring on the subject again the next day, and to have a determination, whether their opinions upon this point, should be a matter of bar to fellowship and communion. On Tuesday, when they met, the business became very distressing. The Arminian party, having the Moderator with them, withdrew out of doors. The other side also withdrew, and chose John Williams as Moderator. Everything was then done by message, sometimes in writing, and sometimes verbally.

After sometime spent in this way, the following proposal was made by the Arminian party:

Dear Brethren,

A steady union with you, makes us willing to be more explicit, in our answer to your terms of reconciliation proposed. We do not deny

87. Semple, 56-59.

the former part of your proposal, respecting particular election of grace, still retaining our liberty, with regard to construction. And as to the latter part, respecting merit in the creature, we are free to profess there is none.

Signed by Order

SAMUEL HARRIS, *Moderator*

To which the other party replied, as follows:

Dear Brethren,

Inasmuch as a continuation of your christian fellowship seems nearly as dear to us as our lives, and seeing our difficulties concerning your principles, with respect to merit in the creature, particular election and final perseverance of the Saints, are in a hopeful measure removing, we do willingly retain you in fellowship, not raising the least bar. We do heartily wish and pray, that God in his kind providence, in his own time, will bring it about, *when Israel shall all be of one mind, speaking the same things.*

Signed by Order,

JOHN WILLIAMS, *Moderator*

These terms being acceded to on both sides, they again met in the meeting house, and resumed their business. Their union was as happy as their discord had been distressing.⁸⁸

The Kehukee Association

To the meeting of the General Association in September, 1772, came John Meglamre and Jonathan Thomas, deputies from the Kehukee Association.⁸⁹ This body was organized in 1769⁹⁰ in the section of eastern North Carolina where the churches gathered by the General Baptists had been reorganized in 1755 as Regular by Miller and VanHorn from the Philadelphia Association.⁹¹ The deputation was sent with the hope of forming a closer connection with the Separates, "whose

88. Semple, 60-61.

89. Sprunt, 15. Semple, 349.

90. Sprunt, 8.

91. Philadelphia Association Minutes, 77-78.

zeal and piety they so much revered."⁹² The two messengers were kindly received and the Association deputed Elijah Craig, David Thompson, Harris and Waller to return the visit. They attended the meeting of the Kehukee in August, 1773. The subject was taken up and the Separates stated their reasons why they could not commune with them. These were that the Kehukee churches were not strict in requiring experiences of those applying for baptism and church membership and that they did not insist on simplicity of dress but indulged in "superfluity of apparel." The chief reason was that the Separates held that faith was essential to qualify a person for baptism, while many of the Kehukee churches had members who had been baptized by the General Baptists before they had been converted.⁹³

In 1772 the Kehukee had admitted Reedy Creek in Brunswick County, Virginia, Zachariah Thompson, pastor,⁹⁴ and Racoon Swamp (since 1853, "Antioch") in Sussex, organized that year, John Meglamre, pastor.⁹⁵ In 1773 it admitted Pungo (since 1856 "Oak Grove") in Princess Anne County, organized in 1762,⁹⁶ and in 1774 Mill Swamp in Isle of Wight, organized that year, pastor, David Barrow.⁹⁷

The most serious objection of the Separates to union with them operated so strongly on the minds of many that in 1774 three of the churches in Virginia and Sandy Run in North Carolina, Lemuel Burkitt, pastor, refused communion with those who were baptized in impenitence and unbelief.⁹⁸ This divided the association and delegates from six churches that

92. Semple, 349.

93. Burkitt and Read, 38, 42-43. Semple, 55.

94. Burkitt and Read, 277. Sprunt, 18.

95. Sprunt, 21. Burkitt and Read, 272. Church Minute Book.

96. Burkitt and Read, 251. The pastor of Pungo, James Gamewell, had received from the Governor of Virginia license to preach and a place for a meeting house had been recorded in the General Court at Williamsburg. (Burkitt and Read, 252.)

97. Sprunt, 14. Burkitt and Read, 270. Church Minute Book.

98. Burkitt and Read, 39-40.

belonged to the Kehukee and four affiliated with the Separates met in 1777 at Sappony in Sussex, and organized with Meglamre, moderator, and Burkitt, clerk.⁹⁹ They agreed upon an abstract of principles that "did not substantially differ from the confession of faith generally received among the Baptists,"¹⁰⁰ and claimed by succession in principles the right to the old name of the association, a claim made also by the churches that opposed the reformation. The Virginia churches that went into the reorganization and the number of their members were Racoon Swamp, 209; Reedy Creek, 320; Mill Swamp, 142; and Sappony, 200.¹⁰¹ Sappony constituted in 1773¹⁰² had been aligned with the Separates. Its pastor, James Bell (1745-78), before his baptism in 1770 was a justice and the sheriff of Sussex County and its representative in the House of Burgesses.¹⁰³ Pungo did not join this group until 1785.¹⁰⁴

99. Burkitt and Read, 45.
100. Semple, 352. In full in Burkitt and Read, 47-51.
101. Burkitt and Read, 46-47.
102. Asplund (1794), p. 31; Burkitt and Read, 280.
103. Burkitt and Read, 57.
104. Burkitt and Read, 75.

Petitions for Religious Freedom AND RELIEF FROM RELIGIOUS DISABILITIES 1770 - 1783

IN 1770 the Baptists began to seek relief from the legislature of the colony. That year "Protestant dissenters of the Baptist persuasion" petitioned the House of Burgesses:

Setting forth the inconvenience of compelling their licensed preachers to bear arms and to attend musters, by which they are unable to perform the duties of their function; and the hardships they suffer from the prohibition to their ministers to preach in meeting-houses not particularly mentioned in their licenses

and prayed for relief. The first part of the petition relating to bearing arms and attending musters was rejected and the latter part relating to meeting-houses was not acted on.¹

In 1772 petitions came from Lunenburg, from Mecklenburg, from Sussex and from Caroline:

. . . setting forth that the petitioners, being of the society of Christians called Baptists, find themselves restricted in the exercise of their religion, their teachers imprisoned under various pretences, and the benefits of The Toleration Act denied them, although they are willing to conform to the true spirit of that act, and are loyal and quiet subjects; and, therefore, praying that they may be treated with the same indulgence, in religious matters, as Quakers, Presbyterians and other Protestant dissenters enjoy.²

A petition from Baptists in Amelia declared that they were:
. . . restricted in their religious Exercises; that, if the Act of Toleration does not extend to this colony, they are exposed to severe Persecution;

1. Journal of the House of Burgesses, May 26, 1770.

2. Journal of the House of Burgesses, February 12, 22, 24 and March 14, 1772.

and, if it does extend hither, and the Power of granting Licenses to Teachers, be lodged, as is supposed, in the General Court alone, the Petitioners must suffer considerable Inconveniences, not only because that court sits not oftener than twice in the Year, and then at a Place far remote, but because the said Court will admit a single Meeting-House and no more in one County; and that the Petitioners are loyal and quiet Subjects, whose Tenets in no wise affect the State; and, therefore praying a Redress of their Grievances, and that Liberty of Conscience may be secured to them.³

On May 17 a bill for extending the Act of Toleration to Protestant subjects, dissenting from the Church of England was reported out of committee. This provided for the registering by the county clerks of meeting-houses. It prohibited preaching elsewhere, meetings at night, fastening the doors of the meeting-houses, the presence of slaves "under pretence of public worship" and their baptism and admission to membership in the churches without the permission of their owners. Other requirements reflected suspicion of the loyalty of dissenters to "His Majesty's person and government."⁴

The bill never came up for final passage. The House was repeatedly prorogued by the governor, Lord Dunmore. When it met again in May, 1774, a petition was presented from "persons of the community of Christians called Baptists and other Protestant dissenters":

. . . setting forth that the toleration proposed by the bill ordered at the last session of the General Assembly to be printed and published not admitting public worship, except in the daytime, is inconsistent with the laws of England, as well as the practice and usage of the Primitive Churches, and even of the English Church itself; that the night season may sometimes be better spared by the petitioners from the necessary duties of their callings; and that they wish for no indulgences which may disturb the peace of government; and therefore praying the House to take their case into consideration, and to grant them suitable redress.⁵

3. Journal of the House of Burgesses, February 24, 1772.

4. In full in Edwards, *Virginia*, from *Virginia Gazette*, March 26, 1772.

5. Journal of the House of Burgesses, May 12, 1774.

There was also presented a petition from the meeting of the Ketocton Association in August, 1773:

Praying that an Act of Toleration be made, giving the petitioners and other Protestant dissenting Ministers liberty to preach in all proper places and at all Seasons without restraint.^b

The Committee on Religion of the House was instructed to bring in a "Bill for allowing a free Toleration to his Majesty's Protestant Subjects in this Colony, who dissent from the Church of England."⁷ But no further action had been taken before Governor Dunmore dissolved the House.

The difficulties that confronted the efforts for freedom from religious restrictions were described by James Madison in a letter from his home in Orange to William Bradford, Jr., in Philadelphia, on April 1, 1774:

Our Assembly is to meet the 1st of May, when it is expected something will be done in behalf of the dissenters. Petitions, I hear, are already forming among the persecuted Baptists, and I fancy it is in the thought of the Presbyterians also to intercede for greater liberty in matters of religion. For my own part, I cannot help being very doubtful of their succeeding in the attempt. The affair was on the carpet during the last session; but such incredible and extravagant stories were told in the House of the monstrous effects of the enthusiasm prevalent among the sectaries, and so greedily swallowed by their enemies, that I believe they lost footing by it. And the bad name they still have with those who pretend too much contempt to examine into their principles and conduct, and are too much devoted to ecclesiastical establishment to hear of the toleration of dissentients, I am apprehensive, will be again made a pretext for rejecting their requests. . . . The sentiments of our people of fortune and fashion on this subject are vastly different from what you have been used to. That liberal, catholic, and equitable way of thinking, as to the rights of conscience, which is one of the characteristics of a free people, and so strongly marks the people of your province, is but little known among the zealous adherents to our hierarchy. We have it is true, some persons

6. Journal of the House of Burgesses, May 16, 1774.

7. Journal of the House of Burgesses, May 12, 1774.

in the Legislature of generous principles both in Religion and Politics; but number, not merit, you know, is necessary to carry points there. Besides, the clergy are a numerous and powerful body, have great influence at home by reason of their connection with and dependence on the Bishops and Crown, and will naturally employ all their art and interest to depress their rising adversaries; for such they must consider dissenters, who rob them of the good will of the people, and may in time endanger their livings and security.⁸

When the Burgesses met in 1775 another petition of "Baptists and other Protestant dissenters" against the prohibition of public worship except in the day time, similar to that of 1774, was presented.⁹ There came also from "the Presbytery of Hanover on behalf of themselves and all the Presbyterians in Virginia in particular and all Protestant dissenters in general" a petition against those parts of the bill proposed in 1772 that were restrictive and annoying.¹⁰

The bill never came to a final vote. The Revolution was impending. "Toleration" was being outmoded with the old form of government. Freedom—political, civil and religious—was in the air and on the way. The Baptists and their allies realized the opportunity and began a contest for full liberty in religion for all men and its complete separation from control or support by the State.

At a joint meeting of the Northern and the Southern district associations at Dupuy's meeting-house in Cumberland (now Powhatan) County in August, 1775, was taken the first organized action in Virginia for religious freedom and the separation of church and state. It was resolved to circulate throughout the State petitions to the Virginia Convention¹¹ "that the church establishment should be abolished, religion left to stand upon its own merits and all religious societies protected in the

8. Hunt, *Writings of James Madison*, I: 223.

9. Journal of the House of Burgesses, June 13, 1775.

10. Original in Virginia State Library.

11. The House of Burgesses had called a Convention to replace the Colonial government.

peaceable enjoyment of their own religious principles and modes of worship."¹²

The Association also sent to the Convention, then in session, this petition:

To the Honourable Peyton Randolph, Esq., and the several delegated Gentlemen, convened at Richmond, to concert Measures conducive to the Good and Well-being of this Colony and Dominion, the humble Address of the Virginia Baptists, now Associated in Cumberland, by Delegates from their several Churches:

Gentlemen of the Convention.—While you are (pursuant to the important Trust reposed in you) acting as the Guardians of the Rights of Your Constitutents, and pointing out to them the Road to Freedom, it must needs afford you an exalted satisfaction to find your Determinations not only applauded, but cheerfully complied with by a brave and spirited people. We, however distinguished from the Body of our Countrymen by apperatives and sentiments of a religious nature, do nevertheless look upon ourselves as Members of the same Commonwealth, and therefore, with respect to matters of a civil nature, embarked in the same common Cause.

Alarmed at the shocking Oppression which in a British Cloud hangs over our American Continent, we, as a Society and part of the distressed State, have in our Association consider'd what part might be most prudent for the Baptists to act in the present unhappy Contest. After we had determined "that in some Cases it was lawful to go to War, and also for us to make a Military resistance against Great Britain, in regard to their unjust Invasion, and tyrannical Oppression of, and repeated Hostilities against America," our people were all left to act at Discretion with respect to inlisting, without falling under the Censure of our Community. And as some have inlisted, and many more likely so to do, who will have earnest desires for their Ministers to preach to them during the Campaign, we therefore delegate and appoint our well-beloved Brethren in the Ministry, Elijah Craig, Lewis Craig, Jeremiah Walker and John Williams to present this address and to petition you that they may have free Liberty to preach to the Troops at convenient Times without molestation or abuse; and as we are conscious of their strong attachment to American Liberty, as

12. *Simple*, 62.

well as their soundness in the principles of the Christian Religion, and great usefulness in the Work of the Ministry, we are willing they may come under your examination in any Matters you may think requisite.

We conclude with our earnest prayers to Almighty God for His Divine Blessing on your patriotic and laudable Resolves, for the good of Mankind and American Freedom, and for the success of our Armies in Defense of our Lives, Liberties and Properties. Amen.

Signed by order and in behalf of the Association the 14th day of August, 1775.

SAM'L HARRIS, *Moderator*
JOHN WALLER, *Clk.*¹³

The Convention at once:

Resolved, That it be an instruction to the commanding officers of the regiment or troops to be raised, that they permit dissenting clergymen to celebrate divine worship, and to preach to the soldiers, or exhort from time to time, as the various operations of the military service may permit, for the ease of such scrupulous consciences as may not choose to attend divine service as celebrated by the chaplain.¹⁴

On May 15, 1776 the Convention instructed the Virginia delegation in the General Conference in Philadelphia to propose a declaration of independence. The Convention adopted a Bill of Rights. The 16th article as reported by the committee was:

That religion, or the duty we owe to our Creator, and the manner of discharging it, can be directed only by reason and conviction, and not by force or violence; and, therefore, that all men should enjoy the fullest toleration in the exercise of religion, according to the dictates of conscience, unpunished and unrestrained by the magistrate unless, under the color of religion, any man disturb the peace, the happiness or the safety of society; and that it is the mutual duty of all to practice Christian forbearance, love and charity towards each other.

On motion of James Madison the word "toleration" to which he objected, was stricken out and the article amended to read:

That religion, or the duty which we owe our Creator, and the manner of discharging it, can be directed only by reason and conviction.

13. Original in Virginia State Library.

14. Journal of the Convention, August 16, 1775.

tion, not by force or violence and, therefore, all men are equally entitled to the free exercise of religion according to the dictates of conscience; and that it is the mutual duty of all to practice Christian forbearance, love and charity towards each other.¹⁵

A petition was received by this meeting of the Convention from the Baptist Church at Occaquon in Prince William County, signed by fifty male members:

To the honourable Speaker; and other Members of the honourable Convention of Virginia, the petition of a Baptist Church at Occaquon, Pr. William County, hereby sheweth that whereas this Colony with others, is now contending for the civil rights and liberties of mankind against the enslaving schemes of a powerful Enemy. We being convinced, that the strictest unanimity among ourselves is very necessary in this most critical conjunction of public affairs; and that every remaining cause of animosity and diversion may if possible be removed, have thought it our duty as peaceable Christians, to petition for several religious privileges which as yet, we have not been indulged with in this part of the World. Viz. 1. That we be allowed to worship God in our own way, without interruption. 2. That we be permitted to maintain our own Ministers &c. and no other. 3. That we and our friends who desire it, may be married, buried and the like, without paying the Parsons of any other denomination. These things granted we will gladly unite with our Brethren of other denominations, and to the utmost of our ability promote the common cause of Freedom, always praying for your welfare & success.

In behalf of the Church, this 19th day of May, 1776.¹⁶

Madison often declared:

. . . that the Baptists had been in all his time the fast and firm friends of liberty; that whilst he was in the Convention of '76, which framed our State Constitution, they had even then, when hope was sinking in the despair of our cause, addressed that body. In that address they declared that the tenets of their religion did not forbid their fighting

15. A note by Madison states that: "This variation was brought forward by him." (Hunt, *Writings of Madison*, I: 40.)

16. Original in Virginia State Library.

for their country, and that the pastors of their flocks would animate the young of their persuasion to enlist for our battles.¹⁷

When the Convention elected Patrick Henry governor, the General Association, meeting in August, 1776, sent him an address of appreciation and congratulation on behalf of the Baptists, to whom he had endeared himself by volunteering to defend their preachers when arraigned before the courts.¹⁸

The Assembly met again in October, 1776. Most impressive of the petitions to the body was that carrying about ten thousand signatures. They had been gathered from dissenters in general throughout the State by the Baptists, in carrying out the resolution of the General Association at its meeting in Cumberland in August, 1775. It read:

To the Honourable the President and House of Delegates
The Petition of the Dissenters from the Ecclesiastical establishment
in the Commonwealth of Virginia

Humbly sheweth

That your Petitioners being in common with the other Inhabitants of this Commonwealth delivered from British Oppression rejoice in the Prospect of having their Freedom secured and maintained to them and their posterity inviolate. The hopes of your petitioners have been raised and confirmed by the Declaration of your Honourable House with regard to equal Liberty. Equal Liberty! that invaluable blessing: which though it be the birth right of every good Member of the State has been what your Petitioners have been Deprived of, in that, by Taxation their property hath been wrested from them and given to those from whom they have received no equivalent.

Your Petitioners therefore having long groaned under the Burden of an Ecclesiastical Establishment beg leave to move your Honourable House that this as well as every other Yoke may be broken and that

17. "Oration on the Life, Character, and Services of James Madison. Delivered at Culpeper Court-House, Virginia, July 18, 1836, by John S. Barbour." Printed in the *National Intelligencer*, Washington, D. C., August 2, 1836.

18. Should this reference be to the Convention of 1775, at which the address from the association in Cumberland was presented by a delegation of ministers? In full, with Henry's reply, in the *Virginia Gazette*, August 23, 1776. Quoted in *Henry*, I: 455.

the Oppressed may go free: that so every religious Denomination being on a Level, Animositities may cease, and that Christian Forbearance, Love and Charity, may be practised towards each other, while the Legislature interferes only to support them in their just Rights and equal privileges.

And your Petitioners shall ever pray.¹⁹

Caleb Wallace, who represented the Presbytery of Hanover before the Assembly, wrote:

It is manifest that our Assembly designed to continue the old Church Establishment. The Baptists circulated a Counter Petition, which was signed by above 10,000 Free-holders.²⁰

Fristoe gives the reasons prompting this great effort by both Baptist groups and their allies:

The Baptists, having labored under oppression for a long time, inclined to seek redress as soon as a favorable opportunity offered. In the year 1776, they united in a petition to the Assembly of Virginia, stating the several grievances they labored under, requesting a repeal of all such laws as might occasion an odious distinction among citizens. . . . This petition, the Baptists were determined to persevere in presenting to the Assembly 'til such times they were attended to, . . . and it appeared at that juncture the most favorable opportunity offered that had ever been, a time when the nation was struggling for civil liberty and casting off British tyranny. . . . But the Assembly being chiefly of the Episcopalian order, and being in the habit heretofore of governing with rigor, it was with great reluctance they could pass a law favorable to dissenters, and raise them upon a level with themselves. What inclined dissenters to be more anxiously engaged for their liberties was that if time passed away and no repeal of those injurious laws, and the nation to which we belong succeeded in supporting their independence, and our government settled down with these old prejudices in the hearts of those in power and an establishment of religion survived our revolution, and religious tyranny raise its banners in our infant country, it would leave us to the sore reflection, what have we

19. Original in Virginia State Library. The segments carrying the names were pasted together to make the immense manuscript. (Eckenrode, 48, n. 221.)

20. Wallace's letter to James Caldwell, April 8, 1777. Quoted in *Henry*, I: 493, from "Historical Magazine, i, 354."

been struggling for? Why was it that from sentiment we united with our fellow citizens in the cause of civil liberty, endured the hardships of a tedious war? And after all this, to be exposed to religious oppression and the deprivation of the rights of conscience in the discharge of the duties of religion, in which we are accountable to God alone and not to man? The consideration of these things stimulated and excited the Baptists in Virginia to use every effort and adopt every measure embracing that particular crisis as the fittest time to succeed, which if passed by might never offer again and they and their posterity remain in perpetual fetters under an ecclesiastic tyranny.

That we might the better be prepared to address the state legislature, petitions were circulated in every direction to the extremities of the state. The Presbyterians concurred with us, for they had in some respects been like sufferers, and numbers of the Episcopalians had become sensible of the injustice with which we had been treated, and afforded their aid by signing our petition, so that when our address was presented in the House of the Assembly, the number of signers was found about 10,000, and for the first time obtained a successful hearing. By act of Assembly establishment of religion, in part, was abolished so far as it respected compulsory measures to pay the parson's salary, and secured to every denomination the right of worshipping God according to the dictates of their own conscience, and that no person was to suffer in his person or property on account of his religious tenets, nor be prevented in the free exercise of them.²¹

A notable memorial from the Presbytery of Hanover entertained:

. . . that all laws now in force in this Commonwealth which countenance religious domination, may be speedily repealed—that all, of every religious sect, may be protected in the full exercise of their several modes of worship, and exempted from all taxes for the support of any church whatsoever further than what may be agreeable to their own private choice, or voluntary obligation.²²

Other petitions, asking that the establishment be “suspended or laid aside,” came from the Tuscarora (Presbyterian) Con-

21. *Fristoe*, 88-91.

22. In full in *Foote*, 323. *James*, 222.

gregation of Berkeley County²³ and from Prince Edward,²⁴ Albemarle, Amherst, Buckingham and Augusta²⁵ counties.

On the other hand the German Lutheran Church in Culpeper, while asking exemption from Parochial taxes other than the support of their own church and poor, declared that it was not "breaking from the established church as do the Common Discenders."²⁶

George Shadford, "in Behalf of the Whole Body of People commonly called Methodists in Virginia, consisting of near, if not all together, three thousand members" assembled in General Convention at Williamsburg in October, 1776, petitioned that:

As we Conceive that very bad Consequences would arise from Abolishment of the Establishment,—we therefore pray that as the Church of England ever hath been so it may still continue to be Established.²⁷

"A considerable number of the clergy of the Established Church" sent a memorial in which they represented:

That, when they took charge of parishes in Virginia, they depended on the public faith for the receiving that recompense for their services during life or good behaviour which the laws of the land promised,—that from the nature of their education they are precluded tolerable subsistence in any other way of life,—that they apprehended many bad consequences from abolishing the church establishment.²⁸

Jefferson wrote in his autobiography in 1821:

By the time of the Revolution a majority of the inhabitants had become dissenters from the established church, but were still obliged to pay contributions to support the pastors of the minority. This unrighteous compulsion to maintain teachers of what they deemed re-

23. Eckenrode, 48.

24. Journal of the House of Delegates, 1776, p. 7.

25. Originals in Virginia State Library.

26. Original in Virginia State Library.

27. Original in Virginia State Library.

28. Journal of the House of Delegates, 1776, p. 48.

ligious errors was grievously felt during the regal government, and without a hope of relief. But the first Republican legislature which met in '76, was crowded with petitions to abolish this spiritual tyranny. The petitions were referred to the commee of the whole house on the state of the country; and after desperate contests almost daily from the 11th of Octob. to the 5th of December we prevailed so far only as to repeal the laws which rendered criminal the maintenance of any religious opinions, the forbearance of repairing to church or the exercise of any mode of worship: and further, to exempt dissenters from contributions to the support of the established church; and to suspend, only until the next session, levies on the members of that church for the salaries of their own incumbents. For although the majority of our citizens were dissenters, as has been observed, a majority of the legislature were churchmen. Among these, however, were some reasonable and liberal men, who enabled us, on some points, to obtain feeble majorities.²⁹

The end of state support for an established church seemed far away in 1774 when Baptists and Presbyterians petitioned against the restrictions of the Toleration Bill. But two years had brought a political revolution and the beginning of a revolutionary change in the relation of government to religion.

The act of 1776, implementing the Bill of Rights, established freedom in religious opinion and worship, and freed after January 1, 1777, not only dissenters from the support of the Anglican Church but its own adherents also. This much of the objectives of the movement launched by the Baptist General Association in 1775 was now realized. Wrote Jefferson:

But our opponents carried in the general resolutions of the commee of Nov. 19, a declaration that religious assemblies ought to be regulated, and that provision ought to be made for continuing the succession of the clergy, and superintending their conduct. And in the bill now passed was inserted an express reservation of the question, Whether a general assessment should not be established by law, on every one, to the support of the pastor of his own choice; or whether all should be left to voluntary contribution.³⁰

29. Ford, *Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, I: 53.

30. Ford, *Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, I: 54.

Marriages and Vestries

When the Bill of Rights was under consideration in the Virginia Convention of 1776, Madison had offered as part of his amendment to article 16: "no man ought on account of religion to be invested with peculiar emoluments or privileges."³¹ This was not included in the bill adopted and during the Revolution the Anglican Church was still regarded as having a favored relation to the state. Its clergy retained the exclusive right to perform legal marriage ceremonies and its vestries, while bereft of their old power to levy tithes for the support of the Establishment, continued to manage the system of poor relief and to assess taxes for it.³²

At its meeting in May, 1778, the General Association decided to present to the General Assembly a memorial asking for equal privileges in celebrating marriages for all ordained ministers of every denomination. This was presented to the House of Delegates on October 25, 1778, and recorded as:

A petition of the Baptist Association; setting forth that doubts have arisen whether marriages solemnized by dissenting ministers are lawful and praying that an act may pass declaring such marriages lawful.

That October the Association disapproved of a general assessment for the benefit of all religious denominations of Christians, which had begun to be advocated, and of the exclusive right of officiating in marriages, supposed by the clergy of the former established church to be possessed by them. Jeremiah Walker, Elijah Craig and John Williams were appointed to lay these grievances before the next General Assembly.³³

In October, 1779, at the meeting of the Association, Walker presented a "highly gratifying" report of his mission to the Assembly and of the bill establishing Religious Freedom that

31. Hunt, *Writings of James Madison*, I:41.

32. Eckenrode, 46.

33. Semple, 64.

had been presented in the House. On consideration of the bill the Association resolved:

That the said bill, in our opinion, puts religious freedom upon its proper basis; prescribes the just limits of the power of the state, with regard to religion; and properly guards against partiality towards any religious denomination; we, therefore, heartily approve of the same, and wish it to pass into a law.

Ordered, that this our approbation of the said bill, be transmitted to the public printers, to be inserted in the *Gazettes*.³⁴

Many Baptist ministers had married those who applied to them, presuming upon a future sanction and guided by the advice of Patrick Henry that this would be the most certain method of obtaining the desired law.³⁵ In some cases there had been agreement that the dissenting minister might perform the ceremony if he turned over the full marriage fee to the incumbent of the parish.³⁶ The Association determined to send a memorial to the Assembly requesting that all such marriages should be sanctioned by law. The memorial was adopted at the next meeting of the Association in May, 1780. It read:

The Memorial of the Baptists by their Ministers, Elders and Delegates (at an Association held at Waller's Meeting-House in Spotsylvania County the second Saturday in May, 1780) humbly sheweth: that we your Memorialists, heartily approve of the Act that passed in your last Session which partly removes the Vestige of oppression, which until then hung over our heads, respecting the Ministers salary Law; and as we hope to enjoy equal, Religious, as well as civil Liberty, while we demean our Selves as good Citizens, and peaceable Subjects of this Commonwealth—we your Memorialists therefore desire that an Act may pass, Declaring Marriages Solemnized by Dissenting Ministers, either by License, or publication, Valid in Law, for until such an Act shall take place, the Validity of Dissenters rights to officiate in the Same, is much disputed:—Your Memorialists having great confidence in the present Honourable Assembly's principles for equal Liberty

34. Semple, 65.

35. Semple, 66.

36. Ireland, 130. Leland, 112. Alderson, "June 4, 1776."

commit our cause now under God's protection into your consideration hoping for redress, and your Memorialists as in duty bound shall ever pray.

Signed by Order and in behalf of the Association,

JOHN WALLER, *Moderator.*

JOSEPH ANTHONY, *Clerk*³⁷

On May 12, 1780, there was presented to the Assembly a memorial in Jeremiah Walker's handwriting, signed by him and seventy-five others, members of Nottoway Church and neighbors, asking that the vestries be elected hereafter by the free voice of the people and that marriage licenses be given to any ministers regularly ordained according to the rules of their societies, and that every doubt might be removed of the validity of marriages already celebrated by dissenting ministers. This was endorsed by the Committee on Religion as "Reasonable. Bill to be brought."³⁸

At its meeting the next October, 1780, the General Association received a letter from a committee of the Kettocton Association of Regular Baptists, "requesting that a similar committee should be appointed by this Association to consider national grievances, in conjunction." Reuben Ford, John Williams and Elijah Craig were appointed.³⁹ A memorial was sent to the Legislature:

To the Honourable the Speaker and House of Delegates:

The Memorial of the Baptist Association, met at Sandy Creek, in Charlotte, the 16th day of October, 1780, in behalf of themselves and those whom they represent, humbly sheweth:

As the Completion of Religious Liberty is what, as a Religious Community, your Memorialists are particularly interested in, they would humbly call the attention of your Honourable House to a few Particulars, viz.:

37. Original in Virginia State Library.

38. Original in Virginia State Library.

39. Semple, 66.

First, the Vestry Law, which disqualifies any person to officiate who will not subscribe to be conformable to the Doctrine and Discipline of the Church of England; by which Means Dissenters are not only precluded, but also not represented, they not having a free Voice, whose Property is nevertheless subject to be taxed by the Vestry, and whose Poor are provided for at the Discretion of those who may possibly be under the Influence of Party Motives. And what renders the said Law a greater Grievance is, that in some Parishes so much time has elapsed since an Election, that there is scarcely one who was originally chosen by the People, the Vacancies having been filled up by the remaining Vestrymen.

Secondly, the Solemnization of Marriage, concerning which it is insinuated by some, and taken for granted by others, that to render it legal it must be performed by a Church Clergyman, according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Church of England; conformably to which Sentiment Marriage Licenses are usually worded and directed. Now, if this should in Reality be the Case, your Memorialists conceive that the ill Consequences resulting from thence, which are too obvious to need mentioning, render it absolutely necessary for the Legislature to endeavor their Removal. This is an affair of so tender a Nature, and of such Importance, that after the Restoration one of the first Matters which the British Parliament proceeded to was the Confirmation of the Marriages solemnized according to the Mode in Use during the Interregnum and the Protectorate of Cromwell. And the Propriety of such a Measure in Virginia evidently appears from the vast numbers of Dissenters who, having Objections against the Form and Manner prescribed in the Book of Common Prayer, proceed to marry otherwise and also that in many Places, especially over the Ridge, there are no Church Parsons to Officiate. On the other Hand, if Marriages otherwise solemnized are equally valid, a Declaratory Act to that Purport appears to your Memorialists to be highly expedient, because they can see no Reason why any of the free Inhabitants of this State should be terrified by a mere Mormo⁴⁰ from their just Rights and Privileges, or censured by others on Suspicion of their acting contrary to Law. To these Considerations your Memorialists would beg leave to add that those who claim this Province of officiating at Marriage Solemnities as their sole Right, undertake at the same Time to be the sole Judges of what they are to receive for the same.

40. She-monster in Greek mythology, used to scare children by their nurses. (Webster.)

Your Memorialists humbly hope that your Honourable House will take effectual Measures to redress these Grievances in such a Way as may manifest an equal Regard to all the good People of this Commonwealth, however diversified by Appellations or Religious Sentiments and that, as it is your Glory to represent a free People, you will be as forward to remove every just Cause of Offence as your Constitutents are to complain of them; and in particular that you will consign to Oblivion all the Relicks of Religious Oppression, and make a public Sacrifice of Partiality at the glorious Altar of Freedom.

Signed by order.

SAM'L HARRIS, *Mod'r.*
JOHN WILLIAMS, *Clk.*⁴¹

In December, 1780, the insistence of the Baptists wrung from the reluctant Legislature an act authorizing judges of courts on recommendation from the elders of the several religious sects to grant licenses to four ministers of each sect in a county to perform the marriage ceremonies within that county alone, and declared such marriages, as well as those already celebrated by dissenting ministers, good and valid.⁴²

The limitation in number and the restriction to one county did not apply to ministers of the Church of England, and the old vestries continued to levy and disburse taxes for poor relief.

The General Association in June, 1782, sent a memorial to the Assembly stating that:

Your Memorialists firmly believe as they are taught in the Declaration of Rights "that no Man or set of Men are entitled to exclusive or separate Emoluments or Privileges from the Community, but in Consideration of public Services." That they cannot see that for a Person to call himself a Church-Man and to conform to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Church of England, is doing the State any publick Service. That it is evident that Dissenters are not on an equal Footing with Churchmen as they are subject to taxation without a fair and Equal Representation by the Vestry Law, and their Ministers so ignominiously distinguished from Episcopal Ministers in the latter Clause of the Act, declaring what shall be a lawful Marriage. Your Memorialists therefore hope that your wisdom and Justice will suggest

41. Original in Virginia State Library.

42. Hening, X: 363.

to you the Expediency of removing the Ground of Animosity, which will remain while Preference is given, or peculiar Favours are granted in our Laws to any particular Religious Denomination.

ELIJAH CRAIG, *Moderator*

REUBEN FORD, *Clk.*⁴³

The Assembly took no action.

In the spring of 1783 two associations were held, one on the north and one on the south side of James River.⁴⁴ Each sent a memorial to the Assembly:

To the Honourable the speaker, and Gentlemen of the House of Delegates; the Ministers and Messengers of the Baptist Denomination assembled at Noel's Meeting House in Essex County, Virginia,⁴⁵ the 3rd day of May 1783, wish Prosperity.

Gentlemen, we congratulate you with all the Sons of Freedom on the Continent, at the return of Peace; and that we are now assured that our rightful Independency is at last established by the general Sanction of the Powers of Europe! Yet, sorry we are in this Time of general joy, that we are obliged to complain of certain Grievances, which we think we have hitherto endured; and that with respect to particular Laws; as the Vestry Act, and that concerning Marriages. What these Laws are, Gentlemen, we need not inform you. But we humbly conceive, that they are in some Measure oppressive to Dissenters! We therefore unanimously judge, that as we have joined with our Brethren in the same Cause of Liberty, that those Laws ought to be amended, as your Wisdom may think fit: So that the full, equal and impartial Liberty of all Denominations, may be indubitably secured; that nothing may remain to lessen our joy and disappoint our Expectation, that every Degree of Oppression for the future, shall be totally abolished throughout the Continent in general, and this State in particular. We are, Gentlemen, your sincere Friends and humble Servants.

Signed by Order of the Association,

WILLIAM WEBBER, *Mod'r.*

JOHN WALLER, *Clk.*⁴⁶

43. Original in Virginia State Library.

44. Semple, 67.

45. "Upper Essex," organized in 1772 (Semple, 124).

46. Original in Virginia State Library.

The Baptists of Virginia

To the Honourable the Speaker and House of Delegates, the Address of Ministers and Messengers, of the Churches of the Baptist Denomination associated in Amelia County, the 12th day of May, 1783, in Behalf of those they represent:

Gentlemen, We congratulate you on the Return of Peace and the Establishment of our rightful Independency under the Auspices of several of the Powers of Europe; yet the general Joy diffused throughout this Continent on account of our Deliverance from British Tyranny, cannot make us insensible of certain Grievances remaining among us, which administer just Cause of Complaint; we mean the Vestry-Law, and that declaring what shall be a Lawful Marriage. By the former of which, our Property is taxed without our being represented, as Dissenters are declared ineligible; and by the latter, Dissenting Ministers are obliged in order to qualify themselves to officiate, to take out a Court License, and are confined to their own Counties, though the Inconveniences are notoriously manifest as the Bounds of their Congregations seldom correspond with the County-Lines.

We cannot conceive that our Conduct has been such in the late important Struggle, as to forfeit the Confidence of our Countrymen, or that the Church-of-England-Men have rendered such peculiarly meritorious Services to the State, as to make it necessary to continue the insidious Distinctions which still exist, we therefore hope the aforesaid Laws will be reviewed and amended; and that no Species of Religious Oppression may remain to damp the general Joy, enervate the Springs of Liberty, and alienate the Affections of the different Denominations from each other.

We do not ask this, Gentlemen, as a Favour which you have a Privilege either to grant or withhold at Pleasure, but as what we have a just Claim to as Freemen of the Commonwealth, and we trust it is your Glory to consider yourselves not as the Masters but Servants of the People whom you have the Honour to represent, and that you will not fail in any Instance, to recognise the Natural Rights of all your Constitutents.

We are, Gentlemen, the faithful Subjects of the State, and

Your most obedient, humble Servants,

PHILIP HUGHES, *Mod'r.*

SIMEON WALTON, *Clk.*⁴⁷

47. Original in Virginia State Library.

In the fall of 1783 the two districts held a joint meeting, their last, and sent the Assembly another memorial:

To the Honourable, the Speaker, & Gentlemen of the House of Delegates; The memorial of the ministers and messengers of the several Baptist Churches in Virginia, assembled at Dupey's meeting house, Powhatan County, 2d Saturday in October, 1783; Humbly sheweth:

That your memorialists, conscious of the justness of our American cause in maintaining a defensive war against Great Britain, freely embarked with our fellow-citizens in the common struggle for liberty; and while we were opposing our enemies in the field we were petitioning our Rulers, at the helm of legislation, to set us free from the yoke of religious oppression, which we long groaned under from the former government. Part of our petition was granted, but our liberties in full, together with those of other dissenters, are not yet, we conceive, ensured unto us, especially respecting the vestry law, in being liable to be taxed without representation; and some parts of the marriage act, as not being set on equal footing with the clergy of the Church of England, by being subject to so great a fine for not making proper returns to the Clerk of the Court, and being restricted to a single County for our officiating in celebrating the rites of marriage, etc. We should also rejoice, as the fee to the Clerk is so cheap for marriage license, if the publication by banns might be left out of the law, if it should appear right to your honourable House.—We have patiently waited, while the great matter of the war was the subject of deliberation, but as the struggle is now happily over, we hope that our former petitions and memorials may be attended to in the depending session, & humbly pray for a redress of grievances & that no law may pass to connect the church & state in the future—and your memorialists shall ever pray, etc.

Signed by order & in behalf of the whole.

WILLIAM WEBBER, *Moderator.*

JOHN WILLIAMS, *Clerk.*⁴⁸

The Assembly of 1783 adjourned without taking action on religious matters.

48. Original in Virginia State Library.

Problems and Progress

1776 - 1787

THE War, though very propitious to the liberty of the Baptists, had an opposite effect upon the life of religion among them. Preachers and people were too much engrossed with thought, means, hopes and fears for the success of the Revolution.¹

In 1776, letters were presented to the General Association by delegates from seventy-four churches, "bringing tidings of coldness and dissention," accounted for in some of the letters as arising from so much concern in political matters. In 1777, "being the height of the war, the associations were but thinly attended and little business done."²

In 1778 only thirty-two churches sent letters.³ Some had formed unfavorable opinions of the propriety and usefulness of associations. After agitating the question at this meeting, it was:

Resolved, that a society of churches combined to seek mutual good of the whole is desirable: That it also promotes acquaintance among brethren, and affords opportunity to consult respecting the best modes of counteracting national grievances. But associations are not to interfere with the internal concerns of churches, except where their advice is requested by any church, in the way of query.⁴

In 1780 there were twenty-nine letters.⁵ In this gloomiest year of the Revolution the Association appointed the third

1. Semple, 35.

2. Semple, 63.

3. Semple, 64.

4. Semple, 65.

5. Semple, 66.

Thursday in November, "A day of fasting and prayer, in consequence of the alarming and distressing times."⁶

At the time of the meeting in Buckingham in May, 1781, Cornwallis was not far away on his march from the South and delegates from only sixteen churches were in attendance.⁷ By the meeting in October, 1782, the war was practically over. The Association "appointed a day of fasting and prayer, on account of the prospects of famine, and to avert the judgments of God, on account of the increasing wickedness of the land."⁸

Combined with the ravages and distractions of the war were internal troubles. The dissention at the meeting of the Association in 1775, occasioned by the query: "Is salvation, by Christ, made possible for every individual of the human race?" left its scars.⁹ These were reopened when John Waller through acquaintance with Robert Williams, a Methodist minister, fully embraced the whole Arminian system of theology and determined to preach it, as he did at the meeting of the Association in 1776. When he failed to carry the Association with him he withdrew, accompanied by all of his adherents, proclaimed his independence and used his great influence and utmost endeavor to form a strong party, preaching over a large territory, ordaining lay leaders and helps in the ministry and holding camp meetings, whose novelty attracted great multitudes.¹⁰

In 1774 Jeremiah Walker had fallen into immorality and been excluded. While soon restored after his apparently deep contrition, he had not fully regained his former standing and influence when, after several years of correct deportment, he fell into a similar transgression and was again excluded.¹¹

These defections "contributed not a little towards dampening the zeal of the Baptists."¹²

6. Semple, 66.

7. Semple, 67.

8. Semple, 68.

9. Semple, 60.

10. Semple, 407-8, 63.

11. Semple, 388.

12. Semple, 35.

Despite them there were organized by the Separates during the period of the Revolution thirty-seven new churches in twenty-eight different Virginia counties. In thirteen of them there had been none before.

Elijah Baker on the Peninsula and the Eastern Shore

Notable were the labors of Elijah Baker of Lunenburg, who had been baptized by Samuel Harris in 1769. After being instrumental in planting and watering several churches in his own and adjacent counties he "began to stretch his lines."¹³ Coming into the "Peninsula" below Richmond, he planted, with the help of Joseph Anthony, seed from which came James City Church in 1773,¹⁴ Charles City in 1776,¹⁵ Grafton in York in 1777,¹⁶ and in Henrico, Boar Swamp in 1777,¹⁷ and Four Mile Creek in 1781.¹⁸ After preaching successfully in Gloucester, he crossed Chesapeake Bay and on Easter morning in 1776 landed at Hunt's Point on Old Plantation Creek in Northampton County and went at once to Magotty Bay Church, where the clergyman of the Establishment was expected. When he failed to arrive Baker preached from a horseblock in the yard. This was the beginning of a fruitful ministry on the Eastern Shore where he organized ten churches in Virginia and Maryland before his death in 1798.¹⁹ The first of these, Lower Northampton, was constituted in 1778,²⁰ the year in which his success caused him to be indicted "for vagrancy" on com-

13. Semple, 393.

14. Semple, 90, 114.

15. Semple, 90, 112.

16. Semple, 90, 115.

17. Asplund (1794), (called "Antioch" since 1846). From it was organized in 1780 by Joshua Morris the First Baptist Church of Richmond (Semple, 90, 111), the oldest church organization in Richmond of any denomination. St. John's was controlled by the vestry of Henrico Parish, to which it belonged. Trinity Methodist was organized in 1799 and the First Presbyterian in 1812.

18. Asplund (1794).

19. Semple, 392.

20. Semple, 280, 283.

plaint of the church wardens. For refusal either to leave the county or to cease preaching until he produced credentials deemed "proper" by the court, he was imprisoned for fifty-six days in the debtors' jail of Accomack County.²¹ He preached through the jail window and in order to silence him he was seized and taken out by a lawless group which carried him on board a vessel,

. . . having contracted with the captain to make him work his passage over the seas, and then leave him in some of the countries of Europe, alledging that he was a disturber of the peace. This took place on Saturday night. He was immediately put to work, and kept at it until late at night. The next day, being Sunday, he asked and obtained leave of the captain to sing and pray among the crew. The captain attended and was convinced he was a good man. Without delay he set him on shore.²²

Lewis Lunsford and the Northern Neck

William McClannahan and William and Daniel Fristoe, Regulars, from northern Virginia, and Theodorick Noel (1753-1813), a Separate from Essex, had preached a few times in the Lower Northern Neck prior to the coming of Lewis Lunsford (1753-93) in 1775.²³ Lunsford, who was then about twenty-two, was a native of Stafford. He had been baptized when a lad by William Fristoe and joined Potomac Church. His youth and his gifts in speaking caused him to be called

21. Accomack County Order Book (1777-80), pp. 90, 99, 102, 136-7, 185. This imprisonment was eighteen months after the passage by the legislature of the act of December 5, 1776, establishing freedom of religious beliefs and worship.

22. Semple, 392. Edwards, *Delaware*, 60.

23. Richard Dozier's "Text Book" gives the preacher, the place, the text and frequently the attendance, with comments for each, of five hundred and thirty sermons from 1771 to 1810, heard by him in Westmoreland County. Hannah Corbin of "Pecatone" and her husband, Doctor Richard Lingan Hall, had become Baptists when they were presented by the grand jury in Westmoreland in 1764 for not appearing at their parish church "for six months past." (Westmoreland County Order Book, May 29, 1764. Armes, 205.) Several years earlier their marriage had gone unlegalized as they had dispensed with the ceremony by a clergyman of the Established Church, required by law prior to 1780. (Armes, 210.)

"The Wonderful Boy." He preached in Richmond County at Joseph Wilson's and the next day at Robert Lyne's, when he was arrested. The court required him to give security that he would not preach in the county for twelve months or go to jail. His attorney, who voluntarily defended him, and his friends advised him to give security and meantime get a license. He tried to do so but could not obtain the license and regretted often that he had not gone to jail.²⁴ Within less than a year Lunsford preached again at Robert Lyne's where an arbor in a field served as his meeting-house. He returned with increasing frequency²⁵ and in 1778 Moratico²⁶ Church was organized in Lancaster with eighteen members.²⁷ In August while Lunsford was preaching from an out-of-doors stage in Lancaster to a congregation of about seven hundred a mob of sixty-five men created a tumult, destroyed the stage and forced Lunsford to retire.²⁸ But he continued to preach to crowds numbering from many hundreds to a thousand hearers.²⁹

On September 6, 1778, "Councillor" Robert Carter (1728-1804), of "Nomini Hall" in Westmoreland, related his experience to the church and was baptized by Lunsford, who baptized Mrs. Carter also.³⁰ These were important accessions. Carter had served in the Governor's Council for fourteen years. He was by far the wealthiest man in the Northern Neck, if not in the State, and was highly and widely esteemed for his social station and public services. Mrs. Carter was the daughter of Governor Tasker of Maryland. They opened their spacious mansion as a place for preaching and for the entertainment of preachers and he gave freely of his thought and substance to Baptist work and to the better training of the Baptist ministry.³¹

24. Dozier, September 9-10, 1775. *Scemple*, 418.

25. Dozier.

26. Named for the home of Alexander Hunton where its first meetings were held.

27. Moratico Church Minute Book.

28. Dozier, Carter Papers, XII.

29. Dozier.

30. Dozier. Carter Papers, 12, 15, 16.

31. Morton, 236. Taylor, John, *Ten Churches*, 40.

Others from the higher social and well-to-do economic classes joined Moratico. Edmund Botsford, an Englishman, who visited the Northern Neck in 1781 "was introduced to four gentlemen in one county—Robert Carter, Esq., John Cralle, Esq., James Cralle, Esq., Thomas Downing, Esq.—all baptized within a month."³² Mrs. Elizabeth Steptoe (1750-1802) "a lady of the first rank, both as to family and as to fortune" and "an ornament to religion,"³³ Captain Joseph Pierce (1729-98) and wife and their son-in-law, Samuel Templeman and his wife were among the fruits of the preaching of Henry Toler³⁴ resulting in the organization of Nomini in Westmoreland in 1786. Pierce's tombstone at the site of his home, near the Nomini meeting-house for which he gave the grounds, states that he was "A very useful Magistrate and Deacon. A lover of Truth, Justice and the Religion of Jesus Christ."

In her "Journal of a Young Lady of Virginia," Lucinda Lee records going in 1782 to see six people baptized. "I assure you," she wrote, "it is a very Solemn Sight."

In 1779 Lunsford established a home in Northumberland County, where he resided until his death in 1793.³⁵ "It is hardly probable," said Semple, "that any man ever was more beloved by a people, when living, or more lamented when dead."

Lunsford was a sure preacher. He seldom failed to rise pretty high. In his best strains, he was more like an angel than a man. His countenance, lighted up by an inward flame, seemed to shed beams of light wherever he turned. His voice, always harmonious, now seemed to be tuned by descending seraphs. His style and his manner so sublime and so energetic, that he seemed indeed like an ambassador of the skies, sent down to command all men everywhere to repent.³⁶

32. Rippon, 107.

33. Semple, 134.

34. Toler was sent by Carter to Dr. Jones' School in Lower Dublin, Pa., for three years.

35. Lunsford's last sermon was at Spring Farm, the home of Captain James Pendleton, near Newtown in King and Queen (Toler, 31).

36. Semple, 419.

Toler described Lunsford's preaching:

With what pungency did he preach the word; what energy clothed his expression; what powers of argument flowed thro' his lips; what earnestness streamed from his eyes; and what music dwelt upon his tongue while to surrounding, gazing, weeping and rejoicing multitudes he preached as if he ne'er would preach again.

Mr. Lunsford did not bear the character of an enthusiast. He acted on deliberate thought and principle and not from the heat of imagination. He was strongly opposed to subscribing any human confession of faith as a test of orthodoxy and to being ordained by imposition of hands. He received popular ordination credentials from Moratico Church.³⁷

Beyond the Alleghanies

In the northwestern part of Virginia Regular and Separate preachers pushed across the Alleghanies and ministered to the scattered settlements on the western frontier.

Goshen,³⁸ constituted by John Corbley, and Ten Mile Creek, constituted by James Sutton, both organized in what is now Washington County, Pennsylvania, in 1773³⁹ and Patterson Creek, constituted by Joseph Barnet, were admitted in 1775 to the Kettocton Association. Together with Laurel Hill and Great Bethel,⁴⁰ both constituted by Isaac Sutton, they were granted immediate dismissal to form in 1776 the Red Stone District Association of churches in Western Virginia and Pennsylvania. The first four of these churches had at that time a total of 121 members.⁴¹ In 1775, in what is now West Virginia, James Sutton organized Simpson's Creek⁴² and John Corbley⁴³ organ-

37. Toler's funeral sermon on Lunsford.

38. Goshen Church Minute Book. (Now "Corbley Memorial" Church.)

39. Asplund (1791), 22.

40. Organized 1770 (Asplund, 1791, 22).

41. Fristoe, 11, 13. Semple, 340.

42. Semple, 336. Simpson's Creek, now in Harrison County, is said to be the oldest Baptist church in West Virginia. (*West Virginia Jubilee*, 249.)

43. Semple, 428. Corbley was elected to the Virginia House of Delegates in 1777 from Monongalia County but was refused a seat as ministers were not permitted at that time to be members of the Legislature (Journal of the House of Delegates, October 31, 1777).

ized Forks of Cheat,⁴⁴ both in Monongalia County. Joseph Reading and John Taylor in 1777 planted Lunie's Creek in Hampshire County.⁴⁵ In 1781 Greenbrier Church was formed by the mutual consent of twelve persons gathered by John Alderson, Jr. (1738-1821), who had preached in this "wild, uncultivated place," going from fort to fort for seven years without seeing another Baptist preacher. "Neither cold nor heat nor storms, nor perils from savages, nor perils from his own countrymen, nor perils from destructive beasts, nor inward temptations, nor outward afflictions retarded his labors."⁴⁶

Joseph Barnet moved further westward and in 1781 helped form Severn's Valley and Cedar Creek, the first Baptist churches organized in that part of Virginia that in 1792 became the State of Kentucky.⁴⁷

In the fall of 1781 Lewis Craig moved from Spotsylvania County, Virginia, to Kentucky, accompanied by most of the members of Upper Spotsylvania (Craig's") Church, with their families, servants, live stock and household goods.⁴⁸ They maintained their organization and carried their church record book with them.⁴⁹ On the road through Cumberland Gap they stopped on Holston River. Here Craig assisted in constituting a church from another party of emigrants "from the older parts of Virginia," which had come to Holston River in 1780. This party moved on in 1783 to Kentucky and established their church on Howard's Creek, now in Clark County.⁵⁰

In December, 1781, after a dangerous and painful journey, Craig's group reached Lincoln (now Garrard) County where they settled and reorganized themselves as a church on Gilbert's Creek. Two years later Craig and most of its members moved across the Kentucky River and formed South Elkhorn.⁵¹

44. Semple, 341. Original records from 1775 in West Virginia State Library (*West Virginia Jubilee*, 163).

45. Later Hardy County. Semple, 191. Taylor, John, *Ten Churches*, 19.

46. Semple, 327.

47. Spencer, I: 20, 23.

48. Ranck.

49. John Taylor saw this book at Gilbert's Creek in 1783 (*Ten Churches*, 43).

50. Spencer, I: 45.

51. Spencer, I: 30.

Many Virginians followed and other churches were constituted. They carried with them and kept the distinguishing names, "Regular" and "Separate," based chiefly on whether they did or did not hold strictly to a confession of faith.

A convention was held at South Elkhorn in June, 1785, with Lewis Craig as moderator, in an attempt to bring about a union of the two groups, but it failed to achieve its purpose. In September of that year messengers from six Regular churches met at the home of John Craig in Woodford County and formed Elkhorn Association. In October, Salem Association was organized at Cox's Creek in Nelson County by representatives of four Regular churches having 123 members. Joseph Barnet was moderator.⁵²

In 1787 messengers from eleven Separate churches met at Tate's Creek in Madison County and formed the "South Kentucky Association of Separate Baptists." Its records stated that it "was constituted on the Bible." It had no written constitution, confession of faith, abstract of principles or rules of decorum.⁵³

Geographical Divisions

As the Separate churches increased in numbers and became more widely scattered, it was increasingly difficult for delegates from all to attend the meetings of the General Association. In 1776 the Association agreed to divide into four districts. The only one actually organized was in the southwestern part of the State and was called, at first, the "Upper District" or "Henry District" before it agreed in 1791 on "Strawberry District."⁵⁴ It corresponded with the General Association through

⁵² Spencer, I: 109, 120.

⁵³ Spencer, I: 147.

⁵⁴ Semple, 63, 261. The churches in the Strawberry District listed by Semple, as existing prior to the organization of the Association, were Leatherwood in Henry County, planted by Stockton in 1772, Pig River in Franklin, by R. Hall in 1777. Asplund (1794) gives 1776 for North Fork of Otter (now "Mt. Hermon"), in Bedford County.

its delegate, Robert Stockton (1743-1825).⁵⁵ The rest of the Separate churches, in spite of several attempts at division into districts, were held together by the necessity for unity of counsel and action in their struggle against religious discrimination. At the meeting in 1783 a division into "Upper" and "Lower" districts on the north side of the James River was achieved. The two associations held separate meetings in the spring, and in the fall a joint meeting, which they continued to call the General Association until 1788 when they divided permanently. The Lower District took the name, "Dover," from the meeting house in Goochland of William Webber, who was its moderator continuously through 1806. Reuben Ford was clerk. The Upper District, called the "Orange Association," met first in 1789 at Crooked Run in Culpeper. John Waller and John Leland for several years acted alternatively as moderator and clerk. The churches south of the James organized in 1784 as the "Middle District," since they lay between the Kehukee on the east and the Henry District (Strawberry) on the west.⁵⁶

At the meeting of the General Association in 1783 John Williams moved that as they were about to divide into sections they should adopt a confession of faith as a standard of principles. They agreed to adopt the Philadelphia Confession, with the proviso:

To prevent its usurping a tyrannical power over the consciences of any, we do not mean that every person is to be bound to the strict observance of everything therein contained, nor do we mean to make it, in any respect, superior or equal to the scriptures in matters of faith and practice; although we think it the best human composition of the kind now extant; yet it shall be liable to alteration whenever the General Committee, in behalf of the associations, shall think fit.⁵⁷

55. Stockton "was among the richest men in those parts." He participated in the constitution of eleven churches in the Strawberry Association before he moved to Kentucky (Semple, 266).

56. Semple, 92, 139, 194.

57. Semple, 68.

A General Committee

AS GUARDIAN OF RIGHTS

1784 - 1799

BEFORE its dissolution, the General Association had proposed the formation of a General Committee made up of not more than four delegates from each of the district associations in the State. This smaller, but more representative body, could act more promptly. Having no local matters to consider, it could devote its attention to those of general concern and act as guardian of the rights of Virginia Baptists in the struggle against remaining religious discriminations.

While the Revolution had produced a modified religious liberty, it had not settled the fundamental relations of church and state in the Commonwealth and it was yet to be decided whether the Revolution should be carried to its logical conclusion and the separation of Church and State completed.

Delegates from four associations, including the Kettocton, met in October, 1784, and organized the General Committee. William Webber was moderator and Reuben Ford, clerk, which offices they continued to hold for its existence, except for a few sessions. The Committee's function was to give its opinion on all queries from any of the associations, to originate all petitions to be laid before the legislature of the State, and to consider the good of the whole society.¹ The business transacted at this meeting was the adoption of resolutions opposing an assessment for the support of religion in general and the

1. Semple, 69. Leland, 113.

incorporation of religious societies, which were being agitated. A petition was prepared and was placed in the hands of Reuben Ford to be presented to the next General Assembly. It read:

The memorial of the Committee of Several Baptist Associations, Assembled at Dover Meeting-House, the 9th day of October, 1784, humbly sheweth:

That your Memorialists still complain of a part of the Marriage Act and Vestry Law, as grievous to Dissenters; for in the former, they are forbid going out of their Counties to Solemnize the Rights of Matrimony, even among Members of their Own Societies and Congregations, whereby the good purpose, which the Wisdom of your Honourable House intended by that Act, is Disappointed. And in the latter, the property of Dissenters is taken from them by those who are not their Representatives.

Your Memorialists therefore humbly pray that all Distinctions in your Laws may be done away, and that no order or Denomination of Christians in this Commonwealth have any Separate Privileges allowed them, more than their Brethren of other Religious Societies, distinguished by other Names: lest they Tyrannize over them.

Your Memorialists have hoped for a removal of their Complaints and the enjoyment of equal liberty; since it hath pleased your Honourable House to declare that their Complaints are just and their Petitions Reasonable; to you, therefore, they look up, that every grievous Yoke be broken, and that the oppressed go free; and that in every Act the bright beams of equal Liberty and Impartial Justice may shine. Your Memorialists shall ever pray.

WILLIAM WEBBER, *Chairman*²

The second meeting of the Committee was in August, 1785. Ford reported that the memorial met with a favorable reception by the General Assembly and satisfactory amendments were made to the marriage law, placing ministers of all denominations on an equal footing.³

2. Original in Virginia State Library.

3. The joint meeting of the Upper and Lower districts in May, 1784, had already sent a memorial to the Assembly reiterating the Baptist complaint that the inequalities in the vestry and marriage laws had received no attention. (Original in Virginia State Library.)

Bill for General Assessment for Religion

But Ford reported, also, that at the last session of the Assembly a bill for general assessment, "establishing a provision for teachers of the Christian religion," had almost passed into a law, when a motion was carried that it should be referred to the next Assembly to give the people an opportunity to consider it. Copies were ordered to be distributed for circulation throughout the State. The bill provided a levy on all taxable property for the support of ministers, or "teachers of the Christian Religion," as they were called, and for providing places of worship. Each tax-payer was to have the privilege of designating the "society of Christians" which should receive his tax. In case of failure to so designate, the Assembly should apply the tax "for the encouragement of seminaries of learning." This had the support of the Presbyterian clergy, who previously had cooperated with the Baptist effort to change the laws respecting religion. The Baptists were the only organized group that opposed the assessment.⁴

The opposition to this bill in the Assembly had been led by James Madison, who prepared for circulation and signatures "A Memorial and Remonstrance." This famous paper is an able discussion of the relation of the State to religion.⁵

The General Committee at its meeting in August, 1785, resolved:

That it be recommended to those counties, which have not yet prepared petitions to be presented to the General Assembly against the engrossed bill for a general assessment for the support of the teachers of the Christian religion, to proceed thereon as soon as possible: That it is believed to be repugnant to the spirit of the gospel for the legislature thus to proceed in matters of religion; that the holy author of our religion needs no such compulsive measures for the promotion of his cause; that the gospel wants not the feeble arm of man for its support;

4. Semple, 70. Hunt, *Writings of Madison*, II: 113. Eckenrode, 99, 103.

5. In full in Semple, 435; in Hunt, *Writings of Madison*, II: 183; and in James, 256.

that it has made and will again through divine power make its way against all opposition; and that should the legislature assume the right of taxing the people for the support of the gospel it will be destructive to religious liberty.⁶

Ford was again appointed to wait on the General Assembly with a remonstrance and petition against assessment. This reiterated that religion is a thing apart from the concerns of the state. "The Church of Christ is not of this world." From which it follows that "they cannot see on what defensible principles the Sheriffs, County Courts and public Treasury are all to be employed in the management of money levied for the express purpose of supporting teachers of the Christian Religion." Furthermore, it is sinful to "compel men to furnish contributions of money to support that Religion which they disbelieve and abhor."⁷

"Representatives of Baptist churches assembled in General Association" in September, 1785, adopted a remonstrance against assessment and the incorporation of the Protestant Episcopal Church.⁸ When the General Assembly met in October, 1785, "the table was loaded with petitions and remonstrances from all parts against interposition of the Legislature in matters of Religion."⁹

Act for Establishing Religious Freedom

At the next meeting of the General Committee in August, 1786, Ford reported that the bill for a general assessment did

6. It was the policy of the Baptists to prepare and promote petitions signed by citizens generally. The petition against assessment from Rockingham in 1784 was headed by Silas Hart and that from Caroline in 1785 by John Young. Reuben Ford headed the petition against incorporation in 1786 from Goochland and Henry Toler that from Westmoreland. The Alebmarle petition in 1790 for the sale of the glebes was headed by William Wood; that from Fluvanna by Philip Webber and William Baskett; that from Nottoway by Simeon Walton. (Originals in Virginia State Library.)

7. Eckenrode, 107.

8. Original in Virginia State Library.

9. Madison's letter to Jefferson, January 22, 1786. (Hunt, *Writings of Madison*, II: 216.)

not pass and that any further efforts to reunite church and state were made impossible by the "Act for establishing Religious Freedom," drawn by Thomas Jefferson:

Be it enacted by the General Assembly, That no man shall be compelled to frequent or support any religious worship, place or ministry whatsoever, nor shall he be enforced, restrained, molested, or burthened in his body or goods, nor shall he otherwise suffer on account of his religious opinions or belief; but that all men shall be free to profess, and by argument to maintain, their opinion in matters of religion, and that the same shall in no wise diminish, enlarge or affect their civil capacities.

And though we well know that this assembly elected by the people for the ordinary purposes of legislation only, have no power to restrain the acts of succeeding assemblies, constituted with powers equal to our own, and that therefore to declare this act to be irrevocable would be of no effect in law; yet we are free to declare, and do declare, that the rights hereby asserted are of the natural rights of mankind, and that if any act shall be hereafter passed to repeal the present, or to narrow its operation such act will be an infringement of natural right.¹⁰

This had been endorsed by the General Association in 1779, following its first introduction in the Assembly. When it became the law in January, 1786, Virginia became "the first government in the world to establish by statute the complete divorce of Church and State,—the greatest contribution of America to the sum of Western civilization."¹¹

Madison said of it:

This act is a true standard of Religious liberty: its principle the great barrier against usurpations on the rights of conscience. As long as it is respected & no longer, these will be safe. Every provision for them short of this principle, will be found to leave crevices at least thro' which bigotry may introduce persecution; a monster, that feeding & thriving on its own venom, gradually swells to a size and strength overwhelming all laws divine & human.¹²

10. Hening, XII: 84.

11. Thom, 78.

12. Madison, *Detached Memoranda*, 554-5.

Incorporation of the Former Established Church

Relics of the old religious establishment remained. In June, 1784, a meeting of the clergy of the former Established Church recommended to the Legislature "the patronage and care of the Christian religion" and asked for an act of incorporation granting to the Protestant Episcopal Church the property of the State that had been used by the Establishment. The act, passed in December, 1784, gave the Episcopal Church certain rights and obligations and was regarded generally as special legislation for one religious denomination, a violation of the fourth and the sixteenth articles of the Bill of Rights and contrary to the principle of separation of church and state.¹³ In 1786 the General Committee resolved:

That petitions ought to be drawn and circulated in the different counties, and presented to the next General Assembly, praying for a repeal of the incorporating act, and that the public property which is by that act vested in the Protestant Episcopal Church be sold, and the money applied to public use, and that Reuben Ford and John Leland attend the next Assembly, as agents in behalf of the General Committee.¹⁴

The memorial sent by the Committee itself to the Assembly read:

The Representatives of Several Baptist Associations in Virginia Assembled in Committee, August 5, 1786, Beg leave Respectfully to address your Honorable House:

When Britain, with her cruel Usurpation over her Colonies in America, reduced them to the necessity of taking up Arms to vindicate their Natural Claims, A declaration of Rights was made by the good People of Virginia, Assembled in full and free Convention, as the Basis and foundation of Government and A Constitution, so Liberal in Civil and free in religious concerns, that we readily took the Oath of

13. Eckenrode, 78, 101, 20

14. Semple, 73.

Fidelity to the State. From this principle we expatiated! for this free government we advanced our property and exposed our lives on the field of battle with our fellow Citizens; being often Stimulated with the harmonious Proclamation of equal Liberty of conscience and equal claim of property.

As hazardous as the Enterprise appeared: under the interposition of divine providence, by the prudence of our Ambassadors, the wisdom of our politicians, the skill of our Generals, the bravery of our soldiers and the aid of our Allies, after a seven years Contest we obtained our liberty and Independence with a vast empire added to us by the late treaty of peace. At this happy period, when America emerged from a bloody Obscurity to such a distinguishing figure of importance among the nations of the world: we felicitated our Selves with the enjoyment of every domestic and Social blessing of human Life. Nor were we willing to harbour a jealous thought of the Legislature, that the Bill of Rights would not be attended to in every particular.

But, to our great Surprize, in the Session of 1784, at the request of a few Clergymen, the members of the late established Church of England were incorporated into a Society, called the "Protestant Episcopal Church," as a body Corporate and politic. To the ministers and members of that Church and their Successors were given all and every Tract, or Tracts, of Glebe Land already purchased, and every other thing the property of the late established Church of England, to the Sole and only use of the Protestant Episcopal Church. If Religion or the duty which we owe to our Creator, and the manner of discharging it, can be directed only by reason and conviction, not by force and violence (so fully expressed in the XVI Art. of the Bill of Rights, and the late Act for establishing Religious Liberty) we cannot see with what propriety the General Assembly could incorporate the Protestant Episcopal Church, give her a name, Describe the character of her members, modulate the forms of her government & appoint the Time and place of her meeting. If this is not done by force, what force can there be in law? and to what lengths this may lead and what violence it may produce, time only can discover, but we fear the awful consequences. The act appears a Bitumen to Cement Church and State together: the foundation for Ecclesiastical Tyranny and the first steps towards an Inquisition.

New Testament Churches, we humbly conceive, are, or should be, established by the Legislature of Heaven and not earthly power; by the

Law of God and not the Law of the State; by the acts of the Apostles and not by the Acts of an Assembly. The Incorporating Act, then, in the first place, appears to cast great contempt upon the divine Author of our Religion, whose Kingdom is not of this world. Secondly, to give all the property of the State established church to one Society, not more virtuous or deserving than other Societies in the Commonwealth, appears contrary to justice and the express words of the IV Art. of the Bill of Rights, which prohibits rewards or emoluments to any Man, or set of men, except for services rendered the State; and what services that Church has rendered the State, either by her Clergy or Laity, more than other Churches have done, we know not.

If truth is great, and will prevail if left to itself (as declared in the Act Establishing Religious Freedom) we wish it may be so left, which is the only way to convince the gazing world that Disciples do not follow Christ for Loaves, and that Preachers do not preach for Benefices.

From the days of Edward the VI, when the Liturgy was first framed, to the year 1661 it was at several times changed and revised by publick authority. This at once shows the fickleness of human Establishments, and while things are so mutable it appears dangerous to religious Liberty for the Legislature to establish Rules and Directions for the Church, unless we were assured our Consciences and Sentiments would always acquiesce in the will of the Legislature.

It is well known that Ecclesiastical Establishment is one part of the British Constitution, and, therefore, the Church of England is obliged to own the King of Great Britain to be her Head. Our declaration of Independence appears to have made every Son of Liberty in America a Dissenter from that Church; but if that does not completely do it, has not the Protestant Episcopal Church since done it in disapproving of a number of old Articles, and forms of worship? If Dissenters, therefore, have no right to that Property it seems That Church cannot lay a just claim to it.

If the members of the Protestant Episcopal Church prefer Episcopacy to any other form of Government, they have an undoubted Right as free Citizens of the State to enjoy it. But to call in the aid of Legislature to Establish it threatens the freedom of Religious Liberty in its Consequences. And, whereas, the Incorporating Act appears to be pregnant with evil and dangerous to religious Liberty, your Petitioners humbly remonstrate against it; and trust that the wisdom of your Hon. House will repeal the exceptionable parts of the said Act

and apply the property to the use of the community in such a manner as to you shall seem just.

WILLIAM WEBBER, *Clk.*¹⁵

When the Committee met in August, 1787, all six district associations were represented for the first time.¹⁶ Ford and Leland reported that they presented the memorial to the Assembly and that the part of the Act which respected the incorporation of the Protestant Episcopal Church as a religious society and marked out its rules of procedure was repealed. But the part of the Act that related to the possession of the glebes remained as it was.

The Glebes

The glebes were the homes and farms for the residences and support of the ministers of the Established Church. They had been acquired in each parish by taxation of its citizens and had been given to the Episcopal Church by the action of the Legislature in 1784. Whether they were public property and their bestowal on one religious group a violation of the Bill of Rights and a dangerous precedent that should be resisted, was a question faced by the General Committee.¹⁷

At its meeting in March, 1788, after much deliberation, the General Committee determined that petitions should be presented to the General Assembly asking for the sale of vacant glebes as public property. A Committee was appointed to prepare a memorial, but at its meeting in August this was left to the discretion of John Leland, John Waller and Eleazer Clay.¹⁸

An act of the Legislature in 1788, giving the trustees of the Protestant Episcopal Church the power to act as successors

15. Original in Virginia State Library.

16. Ketocton, Orange, Dover, Strawberry, Middle District and Kehukee. (Semple, 73 n.)

17. Semple, 74.

18. Semple, 77.

to the vestries in the management of property formerly vested in them,¹⁹ aroused the fear of further reactionary legislation.

By 1789 the Committee was united on the importance of opposition on fundamental principles to partiality exercised by the government in favor of one particular sect. "So incompatible with republican principles," said Fristoe, who recorded that:

We were left to fear it would be made use of in a future day and the established church have it to say, there was a reserve of property to them in preference to all other sects, and that establishment was only in part abolished, and this cockatrice egg produce in time a fiery, flying serpent.²⁰

"A Remonstrance and Petition of the seven Baptist Associations lying between the Alleghanies and the Bay, assembled by their delegates in General Committee," was sent to the House of Delegates, asking, "that all the Lands and other Property, purchased by the People . . . should be put to a public use; and that all the churches . . . should be . . . open and free for all Preachers and People of every Denomination."²¹

In 1790 the Committee appointed Eleazer Clay, John Courtney (1744-1824) and William Webber to present a memorial to the next Assembly and recommended that petitions be presented from the counties.²² Letters were written to the Methodist Conference and the Presbytery of Hanover, acquainting them with the purpose of these petitions and soliciting their assistance in obtaining subscribers. Eleazer Clay and George Smith (1747-1820) were appointed to present them to the Methodists and Robert Stockton and John Anthony (1746-

19. Hening, XII: 705.

20. Fristoe, 94.

21. Original in Virginia State Library.

22. The Roanoke Baptist Association asked "that only the vacant glebes be sold at present, and where there are incumbents that they and their wives have peaceable possession during their natural lives, and at their death to be sold." (Roanoke MS. Minutes, June, 1790.) This provision was incorporated in the Act of 1802.

1822) to the Presbyterians.²³ Neither group responded affirmatively.²⁴

But the Baptists, who recognized this as a final phase of their long struggle, pushed it to its logical conclusion by their persistence. Similar memorials were sent by the General Committee to the Assembly every year and a number of petitions and counter-petitions came from the counties.²⁵ In January, 1794, the Assembly repealed every prior act that had anything to do with religion except the Act for Establishing Religious Freedom, which it declared to be a true exposition of the Bill of Rights and the Constitution.²⁶ This action, by which the ownership of the glebes reverted to the State, established so completely the freedom of religion from support, control, restriction or discrimination by the government, for which the Baptists had contended that the General Committee, "conceiving that the object that required its existence" had been obtained, did "not therefore think it expedient to exist any longer," and in 1799 dissolved.²⁷ The principle having been won, the Baptists through their organizations, showed no interest in the ultimate disposition of the glebes.²⁸

23. Minutes of General Committee, 1790, pp. 6, 7.

24. The Methodist Conference "chose to be neutrals." (Sweet, 105.)

25. Originals in Virginia State Library.

26. Shepherd, I: 149.

27. Minutes of the General Committee, 1799, p. 4.

28. For the act of 1802, authorizing the overseers of the poor in any county to sell any glebe land that might be vacant or which might become vacant by the death or removal of the incumbent, except property acquired by private gift or by subscription, see Shepherd, II: 314. For the unsuccessful efforts to have it pronounced unconstitutional by the Virginia courts in 1804 and again in 1830, see Howison, II: 394-405. For Justice Story's opinion, see Meade, II: 452. Bishop Meade wrote:

"Nothing could have been more injurious to the cause of true religion in the Episcopal Church, or to its growth in any way, than the continuance of either stipend or glebes. Many clergymen of the most unworthy character would have continued among us, and such a revival as we have seen have never taken place. As it was, together with the glebes and salaries, evil ministers disappeared and made room for a new and different kind." (I: 49.)

Philip Slaughter, historiographer of the Episcopal Diocese of Virginia, in his address at the Centennial Council in 1885, stated "that the confiscation of the glebes was right, they having been paid for by a tax on all the people." (p. 54.)

As the promoters of this final act in the removal of legal discrimination between religious denominations by the State, the Baptists were subjected to long continued attacks and misrepresentations of their motives. The Roanoke Baptist Association found it necessary to disown in its Circular Letter "any affinity with the Mad Men of Munster, which has so often been attempted to be fixed upon us by abusive pen and rancorous tongue."²⁹

By his will Nathan Yancey in 1789 left his estate for the creation of a free school for poor children in Elizabeth City County, but provided that "no children of Baptist parents be permitted to attend said school."³⁰

In 1790 the petition to the Legislature, against the sale of the glebes, from members of the Protestant Episcopal Church in King George County, revived old calumnies of the Baptists' "Excess of Religious Enthusiasm without any knowledge . . . of the Sacred Scriptures," and in identical petitions from Amelia, Halifax, Lunenburg, Mecklenburg, and Pittsylvania, the Baptists were accused of "using every Artifice and Deception to get as many Subscribers as possible."³¹

Religious Liberty in the Federal Constitution

The General Committee in its efforts for freedom of religion had not confined itself to the laws of Virginia. At its meeting in March, 1788, it took up the question:

Whether the new Federal Constitution, which had now lately made its appearance in public, made sufficient provision for the secure enjoyment of religious liberty.³²

It was agreed unanimously that it did not. On this ground John Leland, a member of the Committee and an influential

29. Roanoke MS. Minutes, May 1789.

30. *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, XVII, 323.

31. Originals in Virginia State Library.

32. Semple, 76.

pastor in Orange, came out as candidate from that strongly Baptist county for the Virginia Convention, in opposition to its ratification of the Constitution and against Madison, who favored it. After Madison "fully and unreservedly communicated to him his opinions," Leland, at a gathering of the voters at Gum Spring, announced his support of Madison, who was then elected without difficulty.³³ Under Madison's leadership Virginia ratified the Constitution and this insured its adoption.³⁴ Baptist support elected Madison to the first Congress of the United States. In June, 1789, he introduced his promised amendments to the Federal Constitution. The first of them reads in part, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." This, when eventually adopted, embodied in the fundamental law of our Country the historic Baptist principle of the separation of the domains of religion and civil government.

In August, 1789, the General Committee expressed its concern for actual liberty of conscience under the operation of the recently adopted Federal Constitution in an "Address of the Committee of the United Baptist Churches in Virginia, assembled in the city of Richmond, August 8, 1789":

To the President of the United States of America:

SIR,

Among the many shouts of congratulation that you receive from cities, societies, states, and the whole world, we wish to take an active part in the universal chorus, by expressing our great satisfaction in your appointment to the first office in the nation. When America, on a former occasion, was reduced to the necessity of appealing to arms to defend her natural and civil rights, a WASHINGTON was found fully adequate to the exigencies of the dangerous attempt; who, by the philanthropy of his heart, and prudence of his head, led forth her untutored troops into the field of battle, and, by the skilfulness of his

33. Sprague, 177.

34. Hunt, *Life of Madison*, 156.

hands, baffled the projects of the insulting foe, and pointed out the road to independence, even at a time when the energy of the Cabinet was not sufficient to bring into action the natural aid of the confederation from its respective sources.

The grand object being obtained, the independence of the states acknowledged, free from ambition, and devoid of a thirst for blood, our HERO returned with those he commanded, and laid down his sword at the feet of those who gave it to him: *Such an example to the world is new.* Like other nations we experience that it requires as great valour and wisdom to make an advantage of a conquest as to gain one.

The want of efficacy in the confederation, the redundancy of laws, and their partial administration in the states, called aloud for a new arrangement of our system. The wisdom of the states for that purpose was collected in a grand convention, over which you, Sir, had the honour to preside. A national government, in all its parts, was recommended as the only preservative of the union; which plan of government is now actually in operation. When the Constitution first made its appearance in *Virginia*, we, as a society, had unusual strugglings of mind, *fearing that the liberty of conscience (dearer to us than property and life) was not sufficiently secured;* perhaps our jealousies were heightened on account of the usage we received in *Virginia* under the British government; when mobs, bonds, fines and prisons were our frequent repast.

Convinced on the one hand, that without an effective national government the states would fall into disunion and all the consequent evils; on the other hand, it was feared that we might be accessory to some religious oppression, *should any one society in the Union preponderate all the rest.* But amidst all the inquietudes of mind, our consolation arose from this consideration, the plan must be good, for it bears the signature of a *tried, trusty friend;* and if religious liberty is rather insecure in the Constitution "the administration will certainly prevent all oppression, for a WASHINGTON will preside." According to our wishes, the unanimous voice of the Union has called you, Sir, from your beloved retreat, to launch forth again into the faithless seas of human affairs, to guide the helm of the States. May that Divine munificence which covered your head in battle, make you yet a greater blessing to your admiring country in time of peace. Should the horrid evils that have been so pestiferous in Asia and Europe, faction, ambi-

tion, war, perfidy, fraud, and persecution for conscience sake, ever approach the borders of our happy nation; may the name and administration of our beloved President, like the radiant source of day, scatter all those dark clouds from the American hemisphere.

And while we speak freely the language of our own hearts, we are satisfied that we express the sentiments of our brethren whom we represent. The very name of WASHINGTON is music in our ears; and although the great evil in the States is the want of mutual confidence between rulers and the people, yet we all have the utmost confidence in the President of the States; and it is our fervent prayer to Almighty God, that the federal government, and the government of the respective states, without rivalship, may so cooperate together, as to make the numerous people, over whom you preside, the happiest nation on earth; and you, Sir, the happiest man, in seeing the people whom, by the smiles of Providence, you saved from vassalage by your martial valour and made wise by your maxims, sitting securely under their vines and fig-trees, enjoying the perfection of human felicity. May God long preserve your life and health for a blessing to the world in general, and the United States in particular; and when, like the Sun, you have finished your course of great and unparalleled services, and you go the way of all the earth, may the Divine Being, who will reward everyman according to his works, grant unto you a glorious admission into his everlasting kingdom, through Jesus Christ. This, great Sir, is the prayer of your happy admirers.

By order of the Committee.

SAMUEL HARRIS, *Chairman*.

REUBEN FORD, *Clerk*.³⁵

Washington replied:

To the General Committee representing the United Baptist Churches in Virginia.

Gentlemen,

I request that you will accept my best acknowledgments for your congratulation on my appointment to the first office in the nation. The kind manner in which you mentioned my past conduct equally claims

35. Rippon, 168. Drafted by John Leland. (*Writings of Leland*, 52.)

the expression of my gratitude. After we had, by the smiles of Divine Providence on our exertions, obtained the object for which we contended, I retired, at the conclusion of the war, with an idea that my country could have no farther occasion for my services, and with the intention of never entering again into public life. But when the exigencies of my country seemed to require me once more to engage in public affairs, an honest conviction of duty superseded my former resolution, and became my apology for deviating from the happy plan which I had adopted.

If I could have entertained the slightest apprehension that the constitution framed in the convention where I had the honour to preside, might possibly endanger the religious rights of any ecclesiastical society, certainly I would never have placed my signature to it; and if I could now conceive that the general government might ever be so administered as to render the liberty of conscience insecure, I beg you will be persuaded, that *no one would be more zealous than myself to establish effectual barriers against the horrors of spiritual tyranny, and every species of religious persecution.*

For, you doubtless remember, I have often expressed my sentiments, that every man, conducting himself as a good citizen, and being accountable to God alone for his religious opinions, ought to be protected in worshipping the Deity according to the dictates of his own conscience.

While I recollect with satisfaction, that the religious society of which you are members, have been throughout America, uniformly, and almost unanimously, the firm friends to civil liberty, and the persevering promoters of our glorious revolution, I cannot hesitate to believe, that they will be faithful supporters of a free, yet efficient, general government. Under this pleasing expectation, I rejoice to assure them, that they may rely upon my best wishes and endeavours to advance their prosperity.

In the mean time, be assured, gentlemen, that I entertain a proper sense of your fervent supplication to God for my temporal and eternal happiness.

I am, gentlemen, your most obedient servant,

GEORGE WASHINGTON.³⁶

36. Rippon, 170.

Expanded Activities

OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE

1786 - 1792

IN 1786, the Kettocton Association sent delegates to the meeting of the General Committee and the Committee recommended to the district associations that they send delegates to its meeting in 1787 for the purpose of forming a union of the Separates with the Regular Baptists. All six associations did so. Simple thought:

The objections on the part of the Separates, related chiefly to matters of trivial importance, and had been for some time removed as to being a bar of communion. On the other hand, the Regulars complained that the Separates were not sufficiently explicit in their principles, having never published or sanctioned any confession of faith; and that they kept within their communion many who were professed Arminians. To these things, it was answered by the Separates that a large majority of them believed as much in their confession of faith, as they did themselves, although they did not entirely approve of the practice of religious societies binding themselves too strictly by confessions of faith, seeing there was danger of their finally usurping too high a place; that if there were some among them, who leaned too much towards the Arminian system, they were generally men of exemplary piety and great usefulness in the Redeemer's Kingdom; and they conceived it better to bear with some diversity of opinion in doctrines, than to break with men whose christian deportment rendered them amiable in the estimation of all true lovers of genuine godliness. Indeed, that some of them had now become fathers in the gospel, who had borne the brunt and heat of persecution, whose labours and sufferings God had blessed, and still blessed, to the great advancement of his cause. To exclude such as these from their communion, would be like tearing the limbs from the body.

The committee to consider the basis of union recommended the Philadelphia Confession as received by the General Association at its final meeting in 1783. After considerable debate as to the propriety of any confession at all, the report of the committee was adopted with this statement:

To prevent the confession of faith from usurping a tyrannical power over the conscience of any, we do not mean, that every person is bound to the strict observance of everything therein contained; yet that it holds forth the essential truths of the gospel, and that the doctrine of salvation by Christ and free unmerited grace alone, ought to be believed by every christian and maintained by every minister of the gospel. Upon these terms we are united; and desire hereafter that the names Regular and Separate, be buried in oblivion; and that, from hence forth, we shall be known by the name of the United Baptist Churches of Christ in Virginia.

This "happy and effectual reconciliation" included John Waller's "Independents," whose partial restoration had already taken place and who for some years had been meeting in association with the Separate Baptists.² That the old differences did not immediately disappear is indicated by the letter to the General Committee in 1790 from "those who had formerly gone under the name of Regulars, remonstrating against some things licensed among that part of the Baptists formerly called Separates." To this the Committee sent an answer which proved satisfactory.³

In 1792 the minutes of the General Committee record its belief "that the grievance of our sister Kettocton Association with regard to union of the Baptists of Virginia has proceeded from a misunderstanding," and its trust that "they will cordially assent to and unite with the rest of our sister associations, and that for the future all party distinctions, as Regular, Separate and Independent, will be buried in oblivion and be mentioned

1. Semple, 73-5.

2. Semple, 408.

3. Semple, 79.

no more, unless it be with sorrow and lamentations for the former variance and discord that has so long prevailed among us, who possess the same Lord, the same faith and the same baptism." The Committee ordered that the terms of union agreed on in 1787 be inserted in its current minutes and 300 copies be printed "for the information for the Baptists at large."⁴ Semple wrote in 1810 that "the bands of union are apparently much stronger than at first. It is plain that all party spirit is now laid aside and that it was a union of hearts as well as parties."⁵

John Leland's position was:

A union seemed so necessary and desirable, that those who were somewhat scrupulous of a confession of faith, other than the Bible, were willing to sacrifice their peculiarities, and those who were strenuous for the confession of faith, agreed to a partial reception of it. "United we stand, divided we fall," overcame, at that time, all objections; but had they united without any confession of faith, as they did in Georgia, perhaps it would have been better. In kingdoms and states, where a system of religion is established by law, with the indulgence of toleration to non-conformists of restricted sentiments, it becomes necessary for such non-conformists to publish a confession of their faith, to convince the rulers that they do not exceed the bounds of toleration; but in a government like that of Virginia, where all men believe and worship as they please—where the only punishment inflicted on the enthusiastical, is pity—what need of a confession of faith? Why this Virgin Mary between the souls of men and the scriptures? Had a system of religion been essential to salvation, or even to the happiness of the saints, would not Jesus, who was faithful in all his house, have left us one? If he has, it is accessible to all. If he has not, why should a man be called a heretick because he cannot believe what he cannot believe, though he believes the Bible with all his heart? Confessions of faith often check any further pursuit after truth, confine the mind into a particular way of reasoning, and give rise to frequent separations. To plead for their utility, because they have been common, is as good sense, as to plead for the state establishment of religion, for the

4. Minutes of the General Committee, 1792, p. 4.

5. Semple, 76.

same reason; and both are as bad reasoning as to plead for sin because it is everywhere. It is sometimes said that hereticks are always averse to confessions of faith. I wish I could say as much of tyrants. But after all, if a confession of faith, upon the whole, may be advantageous, the greatest care should be taken not to sacrifice or make a petty Bible of it.⁶

Leland's own beliefs were stated in his letter of February, 1788, to Robert Carter:

The Creed, that I could die for, may be registered on a small Piece of Paper; which is as follows.

I believe there is a God, possessed with all glorious Perfections. 2. That the Book called the Bible, is of divine Authenticity. 3. That Jesus Christ is the Messiah, properly God and Man. 4. That Men are all fallen from God. 5. That absolute Necessity of a Death unto Sin and a new Birth unto Righteousness to be either safe or happy. 6. That what System or Spirit soever a Man have that does not lead him to love God, hate Sin, deny himself and follow after Holiness, is certainly wrong.⁷

In 1776, Leland had been ordained by his church (Mt. Poney) like Lunsford, without the impositions of hands by a presbytery, but contrary to Virginia usage, and because of this was not generally fellowshipped by the churches. But in 1787 he submitted to the form as a "link in the chain of events that produced a union among all the Baptists in Virginia."⁸

"The Great Revival"

The inflation and speculation following the Revolution were not conducive to spiritual interests and there were but few exceptions to the general religious declension. But beginning in 1785 the "Great Revival" of religion swept through the

6. *Writings of Leland*, 114.

7. Original in Carter papers in Library of Congress.

8. *Writings of Leland*, 19, 26. An account of this ordination is quoted from the *Baptist Weekly* by E. C. Herrick in "Elder John Leland." (*Crozer Quarterly*, XXV, 137.)

State for the next six years. Nothing like it had ever been heard of before in Virginia. Thousands were converted and baptized. While the Methodists⁹ and Presbyterians received many additions, the Baptists were its chief promoters and beneficiaries. Few churches were unblest by it. To a large degree they became community churches and their members a cross-section of the population.

The revival was attended by the emotional outbursts characteristic of the period. Many of the preachers did not at first approve of them. Others fanned them as "fire from heaven."¹⁰ Singing had a large part in the revival. Bands went singing to meetings, sang after the preaching, went singing home and from fields, shops and houses "made the heavens ring" with "spiritual songs." These were generally the compositions of Isaac Watts but a number originated in Virginia.¹¹ Young Andrew Broaddus I, forbidden by his father to attend the Baptist night meetings in neighboring homes, would go out doors and listen to the singing, softened by the distance and made more impressive by the stillness of the night. In his latter years it still seemed to him "more like the music of heaven" than any to which he had ever listened.¹²

In many instances the excitement brought into the churches those who afterwards caused disorder and had to be gotten out, and vigilance was necessary to suppress fanaticism, "the effect of natural and unenlightened emotions." In 1792 the letters to the Dover Association stated that the harvest was past and that many of the churches excluded more than they received.¹³ But the total effect of the revival was a great strengthening of the churches by the addition of people who combined sincerity

9. Bennett, 241.

10. Culpeper Ms. Minutes, 1802.

11. "Some Virginia songs have more divinity in them than poetry or grammar and some that I have heard have but little of either." (Leland, 115.)

12. Andrew Broaddus, *Memoir*, 12.

13. Semple, 38, 95.

and devotion with education, weight and leadership. The Baptist congregations became larger than those of any other denomination. The moral life of their communities was raised to a higher level and the Baptists became the leaders in religious influence in much of the State.

These changes in their congregations affected the mode of their preaching. Peculiar mannerisms in tones and gestures, partly handed down from Shubal Stearns and partly the effect of preaching out of doors to large crowds,¹⁴ were discarded. Their sermons "had more of sound sense and strong reasoning, their zeal was less mixed with enthusiasm and their piety became more rational."¹⁵

With the appreciation of their increased consequence came broader interests: acquaintance and fellowship with Baptists elsewhere, care for the proper recording of the history of their rise and remarkable achievements in Virginia, realization of the social and religious problems of slavery, the importance of education and the support of the ministry.

In addition to its primary function of striving for the elimination from the statutes of all laws concerning religion, the General Committee during the earlier part of its existence interpreted broadly the consideration of these other matters of concern to "the Baptist society at large."¹⁶

Broadening Relations

In response to a letter from Virginia to the Warren Association in Massachusetts, asking the aid of ministers, Asa Hunt came in 1787 and Isaac Backus in 1789 and made preaching tours in the State.¹⁷ On Hunt's return to Massachusetts he and

14. Semple, 367. John A. Broaddus, 245.

15. Semple, 39.

16. Semple, 70.

17. Hunt's letters of December 12, 1787, and August 12, 1788, to Robert Carter. (Library of Congress.)

Lemuel Powers of New York State proposed a correspondence between their associations and the General Committee which readily agreed. Leland, who had come from New England in 1776, was appointed to visit them and letters were exchanged.¹⁸

In 1790 letters of correspondence and friendship with copies of its minutes were sent by the General Committee "to each association of Baptists on the Continent," with requests for their minutes.¹⁹ "The usefulness of the General Committee in keeping up a correspondence and intercourse among the Baptist throughout the United States was inconceivable. From Georgia to Massachusetts they were known and received, occasionally from some and statedly from others, letters, minutes and other indications of fellowship." Hopes were entertained of forming a general meeting to be composed of delegates from all the states in the Union.²⁰

Copies of the minutes of the General Committee and of the district associations were sent to England to John Rippon and were reprinted in his *Baptist Annual Register* for 1790, 1791, 1792 and part of 1793, which contained nineteen communications from or about Virginia. The *Register* was dedicated:

To all the baptized Ministers and people of America, England, Ireland, Scotland, Wales, The United Netherlands, France, Switzerland, Poland, Russia, Prussia and elsewhere . . . with a desire of promoting an universal interchange of kind offices among them and in serious expectation that before many years elapse . . . a deputation from all these climes will meet probably in London to consult the ecclesiastical good of the whole.²¹

This gave Virginia Baptists a world wide horizon.

In 1785 the Committee considered the need of a form of marriage ceremony. It recommended that "laid down in the

18. Semple, 77.

19. Minutes of the General Committee, 1790, p. 5.

20. Semple, 78.

21. Rippon's dream came true 115 years later when the first Baptist World Congress met in London in 1905.

Common Prayer Book, leaving out a few exceptional parts" and ordered it to be printed. It also had reprinted the catechism for children called "Milk for Babes."²²

A History of the Baptists in Virginia

At its meeting in 1787 the General Association, as the joint meeting of the Upper and Lower districts north of the James continued to be called, considered "whether we will advise forming the History of the Baptists in Virginia," and referred the question to the General Committee. The General Committee took up the reference in 1788 and resolved:

That Samuel Harris, John Williams, Simeon Walton, John Leland, Henry Toler and Lewis Lunsford be apportioned to collect materials for compiling and publishing *a history of the Baptists in Virginia* and report to the next General Committee.

In 1789 others were added so that there might be a representative in each district association to collect documents. The committee reported in 1790 that there had been "a foundation laid." It recommended John Leland and John Williams to engage in publishing such a history and desired them to be assisted by those who had collected materials.

The Circular Letter of the Roanoke Association to its constituent churches in 1789 was written by John Williams, its clerk, and urged:

. . . the exertion and the assistance of churches, ministers and individuals to complete a history of the Baptist churches in Virginia—their rise, progress, relations, remarkable events and occurrences, chief instruments, present standing, etc. . . . We desire every circumstance to be handed forth in as clear and conspicuous a point of view as possible, perfectly consistent with candor and truth, that it may be capable of bearing the most critical remarks."

22. Semple, 72. Letter from Eleazer Clay to Robert Carter, Dec. 9, 1787, enclosing several copies of each. (In Library of Congress.)

When Leland went back to New England in 1791 the compilation of the history was left altogether to Williams. "He had made no inconsiderable progress in collecting documents" when he became crippled from a fall and resigned his trust.²³

Rhode Island College

"Councillor" Robert Carter in 1783 brought to the attention of Morattico Church, of which he was clerk, the action of the Warren Baptist Association in New England recommending "a subscription throughout all the Baptist Societies on the Continent to meet the urgent necessity of increasing the funds of the Baptist College in Providence, Rhode Island, in order to support suitable instructors." The church appointed a committee "to apply to all the brethren and sisters, and all other denominations, who are willing to promote so laudable a design." The money collected was sent through Carter to the treasurer of the college.²⁴ This led to a correspondence between Carter and President James Manning²⁵ about Baptist affairs.

A Seminary of Learning

The General Committee in 1788 received a letter from Manning "recommending and encouraging the Baptists of Virginia to erect a seminary of learning." Samuel Harris, John Williams, Eleazer Clay, Simeon Walton and David Barrow, on the south side of James River, and Robert Carter, John Waller, William Fristoe, John Leland and Reuben Ford, on the north side, were appointed "to forward the business respect-

23. Semple, 86. Semple, on whom devolved the preparation of the history and its publication in 1810, stated that "many of our historical relations of the churches on the south of James River are extracted from manuscripts written by Mr. Williams, aided by Mr. Asplund." (Semple, 254 n.)

24. Morattico Church Minute Book, Feb. 17, 1783.

25. Letters in Library of Congress. Manning was President of Rhode Island College (now Brown University) from its beginning in 1765 until his death in 1791.

26. Semple, 78.

ing a seminary of learning."²⁶ When the report from the General Committee came before the Roanoke Association in 1789 it recorded that the importance of this action was "unanimously acknowledged" and "the prospect of succeeding, favourable, therefore everyone agrees to exert himself for the promotion thereof." The Circular Letter from this meeting, written by John Williams, said:

Two seminaries at present are proposed in our state, one on each side of James River. We have sufficient encouragement from our learned brethren in the North, that we shall not want for able, skillful teachers. This will also require very diligent exertions and liberal contributions. And if we, in this, as we ought in everything, do it with a single eye to the glory of God and the advancement of the Redeemer's interest, then shall we have sufficient grounds to hope that we shall meet with the approbation of heaven.

The committee on the seminary had no report to the General Committee in 1789 and was continued with a few changes. There is no record of any further action until 1792 when John Williams and Thomas Read were appointed to prepare and bring in a plan to the next Committee for the establishment of one seminary. All former appointments were dissolved.

In 1793 Williams presented a plan for the Committee to appoint fourteen trustees who were Baptists and who should choose "seven gentlemen not of the Baptist society." The twenty-one trustees should devise ways and means for carrying the enterprise into immediate execution. The trustees were appointed and held one or two meetings.²⁷ But discouraged by the death of John Williams, the active promoter of the plan, and the removal to Kentucky of others, and apprehensive of their ability to raise sufficient funds, they gave up the undertaking.²⁸

27. The trustees appointed by the Committee were David Barrow, Thomas Burford, Eleazer Clay, George Eve, Reuben Ford, Thomas Johnson, John Poindexter, Thomas Read, Bernard Todd, Henry Toler, Simeon Walton, John Williams, Matthew Woodson and Stephen Woodson.

28. Semple, 86. It was revived successfully when the Virginia Baptist Seminary was established in 1832.

Meantime the importance of general education was emphasized. The Circular letter of the Roanoke Association in 1791 was devoted to this subject. It asked:

Can a parent bestow a more valuable treasure upon children than to give them education? This will abide with them when other treasures are all exhausted. In a word, if you wish to see your children useful and reputable, you must be thorough in their education.

Support of the Ministry

The permanent fruits of the Great Revival might have been larger had there been a greater number of ministers to gather them. "In the late great additions that have been made to the churches there are but few who have been engaged in the work of the ministry. Whether it is not a judgment of God for neglecting those who are already in the work, not communicating to them in all good things, I cannot say," wrote Leland.²⁹

The early Baptists in their antipathy to the Establishment with its salaried clergy, and in their wish to escape any imputation of preaching for money by a "hireling ministry" gave very little financial aid to their preachers, who supported themselves and their families on their farms or by their vocations. The result was that the time given to their ministry was limited or their families suffered want. Emigration of preachers to the fertile soil of Kentucky was well under way in the 1780's but was held up by the defeat by the Indians of General Harmer in 1790 and the defeat of General St. Clair in 1791. It was resumed after General Wayne's victory in 1794.

The Circular Letter of the Roanoke Association in 1789³⁰ urged, "Let him that is taught in the word communicate to him that teacheth in all good things." It enjoined those that could not communicate in money to do it in other ways. It recommended that collections be taken when there is public worship

29. *Writings*, 116.

30. By John Williams, Clerk (Roanoke MS Minutes, I, 27).

and that each one give as the Lord has prospered him. The Letter in 1790 urged that "Spiritual watchmen should be strengthened by liberally contributing for their support, by which they may be able to give themselves wholly to the work of the ministry." The Association recommended to the churches to be liberal in their contributions to funds to assist poor and worn-out ministers and their widows and orphans. Article 19 of the Abstract of Principles adopted that year read:

We believe that such as are called, qualified and set apart to the work of the ministry ought, as much as in them lies, to give themselves up to the work, and that they ought to receive from the churches and congregations to whom they preach sufficient support for themselves and their families.

In 1793 the Circular Letter said:

It is ordained that they who preach the Gospel shall live of the Gospel, and if it be barbarous and inhuman to muzzle the ox in your employment, surely it is more so when you neglect to support the hands of your ministers. The frivolous arguments of poverty ought not to be mentioned.

The Circular Letter of the Middle District Association in 1791 asked:

How can a minister do the duties of an husbandman, and at the same time comply with Paul's exhortation, give himself up to the ministry wholly? Impossible—Brethren, therefore, unite and liberally bestow on the labourers in word and doctrine those things which their families really want, and let them act in that office which God has called them to fulfill. We fear covetousness and want of support of the ministry is one great reason why we are so languid in vital religion, that when our ministers ought to be out and working in God's vineyard behold they are forced to leave the flock to hunger for food, while they provide real necessaries for their families.

The Dover's Circular Letter in 1795 emphasized that "the Lord ordained that they which preached the Gospel should live of the Gospel." The Kettocton Association in its Circular Letter

for 1796 stated that members of a Gospel church according to their supreme law of the spiritual kingdom, are to pay according to their several abilities.

The Portsmouth Association in its Circular Letter in 1796 discussed at length "the duty of churches to maintain their ministers, to supply them with all the necessaries of this life and use every means in their power to rid their minds of worldly cares." Asplund (1791) lists as "practical religion":

The support of the gospel, that God's servants may be wholly given up to their great calling, and that everything may be decent in the house of God, and our poor brethren supported.

The care of the churches prompted the Middle District Association in 1792 to adopt a plan for inspection and aid, and to agree that persons appointed by the Association should visit every church in the district and

. . . enquire into their state and standing to see whether the word and ordinance are duly administered; discipline kept up; gifts encouraged and licensed; a sufficient number of deacons ordained; pastors supported; flocks visited from house to house and their numbers known; churches destitute of pastors instructed in their duties; small constitutions, not able to live, to be dissolved; over grown churches to be constituted for convenience.³¹

Slavery

A subject taken up by the General Committee in 1788³² and referred to its next session was, "whether a petition should be offered to the General Assembly, praying that the yoke of slavery may be made more tolerable."

In May, 1790, the General Committee "agreed to take into consideration a reference concerning the equity of Hereditary Slavery." William Fristoe, Reuben Pickett, John Waller and David Barrow were appointed to form a resolution. They re-

31. Semple, 196.

32. The date, "1778," in Semple, p. 76 is a typographical error.

ported the next day that they could not agree in their opinions on that subject. The responsibility was laid on John Leland who presented a resolution:

That slavery is a violent deprivation of the rights of nature and inconsistent with a republican government; and therefore recommend to our brethren to make use of every legal measure, to extirpate the horrid evil from the land, and pray Almighty God that our Honourable Legislature may have it in their power to proclaim the general Jubilee, consistent with the principles of good policy.

This was agreed to by the Committee.

The humanitarian as well as economic problem was, where the freedmen could go and what they could do for support. When the Minutes of the General Committee were read at the meeting of the Roanoke Association in June, 1790, that body unanimously agreed:

. . . to remonstrate, as Christians, against oppression as we discover the same, and that we are heartily disposed to be under the influence of the spirit of humanity, yet never the less, we believe it would be a very great violation thereof (very little short of driving our children from us in a state of nonage) to emancipate our slaves promiscuously without means or visible prospects of their support: That tho' we are not unanimously clear in our minds whether the God of nature ever intended that one part of the human species should be held in an abject state of slavery to another part of the same species; yet the subject with us is so very abstruse, and such a set of complex circumstances attending the same, that we suppose neither the General Committee nor any other religious society whatever has the least right to concern therein as a society, but leave every individual to act at discretion in order to keep a good conscience before God, as far as the laws of our land will admit; and that it is the indispensable duty of masters to forbear and suppress cruelty and do that which is just and equal to their servants.

In May, 1791, the Committee resolved:

That the resolution which passed the General Committee in the year 1785: ("Declaring hereditary slavery to be contrary to the word of God") be again referred to the district associations and from thence

to their respective churches, desiring them to take the matter into consideration, and show their opinion on this subject to the General Committee.³³

The Strawberry Association in October, 1791, considered the request and answered: "We advise them not to interfere in it."³⁴

In 1792 the resolution concerning slavery was referred to the next General Committee which, after considering it, "voted by a majority, that the subject be dismissed from this Committee as it belongs to the legislative body."

Although debarred from consideration by the General Committee the vexing problems of slavery continued to trouble the consciences of individuals and were brought before the associations. Leland discussed its evils and the difficulties of manumission in his *Virginia Chronicle* in 1790, and in his "Letter of Valedictory on Leaving Virginia" in 1791.³⁵ Asplund, in his *Register* for that year, listed among the "inconsistencies" that he hoped "that my dear brethren will consider thoroughly":

Keeping our fellow-creatures in bondage, who have as good a right as we, both to civil and religious liberty—Not only so, but misusing them concerning common blessings, which certainly is a violation of the rights of nature and inconsistent with a republican government.

David Barrow, pastor of Mill Swamp Church in Isle of Wight County, "from a conviction of the iniquity and discovery of the inconsistency of hereditary slavery with a Republican form of government"³⁶ manumitted his slaves in 1784. Semple said:

Although this measure proved his disinterested zeal to do right, it is questionable whether it was not in the end productive of more evil

33. No other reference to a resolution in 1785 has been found.

34. There is no reply recorded in the minutes of the Dover, Portsmouth or Roanoke. The minutes of the other district associations for that year are not available.

35. *Writings*, 94, 173. During his residence in Virginia Leland never owned a slave. (*Writings*, 51).

36. "Circular Letter," on moving to Kentucky in 1797, p. 4 n.

than good. While it embarrassed his affairs at home by lessening his resources for the maintenance of a large family, it rendered him suspicious among his acquaintances and probably, in both ways, limited his usefulness.³⁷

Barrow wished "that all masters, or owners of slaves, may consider whether in this particular they are doing *as they would others should do to them.*"

When Robert Carter of Westmoreland County, in 1791, put in operation a plan of gradual manumission for over five hundred of his slaves, he had just left the Baptists and become a Swedenborgian. But it was while a Baptist that he had "for some time past been convinced that to retain them in slavery is contrary to the true Principles of Religion and Justice."³⁸

Carter's pastor, Lewis Lunsford, "was in favor of the freedom of slaves, provided a general and equitable method for their emancipation could be devised, and believed it would be accomplished."³⁹

Another influential Baptist in Westmoreland, Captain Joseph Pierce, provided in his will in 1798 for the gradual liberation of his slaves.⁴⁰

The Portsmouth Association of which David Barrow was moderator, declared in 1796:

Covetousness leads Christians, with the people of the country in general, to hold and retain in abject slavery a set of our poor fellow creatures, contrary to the laws of God and nature.

The Dover Association in 1797 considered the query:

Would it not be good policy, as well as an act of justice for the Baptists to form a plan, for the gradual emancipation of slavery among themselves?

37. Semple, 360.

38. Rippon, 220.

39. *Toler's Funeral Sermons*, 24 n.

40. Westmoreland County Deed and Will Book, No. 19, p. 353.

It answered:

We sincerely sympathize, both as Christians and Citizens, with those unhappy People, and although we think it a delicate matter, we would not wish to be backward in promoting their happiness and liberty, upon cautious grounds. We would, therefore, recommend to our Brethren to unite with the Abolition Society in proposing a petition to the General Assembly for their gradual emancipation upon some rational and benevolent plan.

In 1796 the Kettocton Association, when asked by Happy Creek Church,

Can the present practice of holding Negroes in slavery be supported by Scripture and the true principles of a republican government?

refused to take it up, "considering it as an improper subject of investigation in a Baptist Association, whose only business is to give advice to the Churches respecting religious matters; and considering the subject of this query to be the business of government, and a proper subject of Legislation."

But the next year the Association agreed to investigate the subject of slavery and answered in the affirmative two questions:

1st. Is Hereditary Slavery a transgression of the Divine Law?

2nd. Is not the bondage of the African among us a species of Hereditary Slavery, and consequently a continuance of that practice a transgression of the Divine Law?

"But taking into consideration the variety of circumstances attending the situation of those distressed people, and the perplexing circumstances of many of their holders, respecting themselves, their connexions, and in many instances their just creditors," the Association was "of opinion, that the gradual abolition of Slavery would be the most eligible made, under present circumstances." The Association appointed a committee of six to draw up a plan of general emancipation. This was done in detail and inserted in the minutes for 1797 for the consideration of the churches, which were asked to signify their

minds or send a more eligible plan to the next session of the Association. This "excited considerable tumult in the churches and in their letters they remonstrated so decidedly" that the Association in 1798 resolved to take no further steps.⁴¹ While in 1801 it resolved that this resolution was "no bar to future discussions," there is no record of any discussions thereafter.

While the agitation of the humanitarian and religious questions of slavery and manumission brought no general solution of the problem, it resulted in a greater interest in the spiritual and temporal welfare of the slaves. Leland, after fourteen years residence observed,

I am heartily glad that I can say that the spirit of masters has greatly abated since I have been in Virginia.⁴²

Negro Preachers, Pastors and Churches

Negroes had always been admitted to the Baptist churches in Virginia and allowed to "exercise their gifts." In 1792 the Roanoke Association agreed to purchase Simon, a Negro slave, in order to set him free, "as we think him ordained of God to preach the Gospel."

Dozier mentioned a Negro named Lewis, "belonging to Mr. Brokenborough in Essex," whom he heard in the Northern Neck in 1782 speak "by way of exhortation to about 400 people, with the greatest sensibility I ever expected to hear from an Ethiopian." Dozier heard him again in 1787, when he read from the New Testament to the astonishment of the audience. "His gift exceeded many white preachers."

Dozier described "Negro Jacob, a slave who came from the Eastern Shore with Mr. Bacon" and preached in 1789 at Farnham in Richmond County, as "a most wonderful preacher." In Asplund's *Register* for 1791 "Jacob (N)" is listed as a licentiate of Lower Northampton (p. 30). The *Register* for

41. Semple, 304.

42. *Writings*, 173.

1796 mentions Jacob Bishop, a Negro Baptist itinerant, a member of "Magotty Bay." In their sketch of "the Church in Portsmouth and Norfolk" (now Court Street) Burkitt and Read stated:

In 1795 there came a black preacher from Northampton County in Virginia, whose name was Jacob Bishop. The brethren and friends in that county gave him money to buy his freedom, which he did, and soon after bought his wife's. After he came to Norfolk he bought his eldest son's freedom. His preaching was much admired by both saints and sinners.

The church was advised by a council in 1796 that "it would be best to consider the black people as a wing of the body and Jacob Bishop to take the oversight of them." In 1798 he was a delegate from the Portsmouth Church to the Portsmouth Association. When it was asked in 1794 if it was agreeable to send a free, black man as a delegate, the Association answered that it could see nothing to prohibit the church from sending any male member it chose.⁴³

William Lemon, "a man of colour," was delegate to the Dover Association in 1797, 1798 and 1801 from Petsworth Church in Gloucester, of which he was pastor.⁴⁴

Asplund's Registers for 1794 and 1796 listed under "Baptist Negroes" "a church in York and James City Counties, 200 members, Gowen Pastor, Joseph Mead itinerant," organized in 1781; and a church in King and Queen County of 100 members, "Toney pastor," organized in 1782.

In 1791 a church in Williamsburg of about 500 people "almost, if not altogether, people of colour," pastored by Gowan Pamphlet, petitioned to join the Dover Association. Their first pastor had been Moses, "a black man" who "was often taken up and whipped for holding meetings." Pamphlet

43. Benedict (1813) listed Jacob Bishop as pastor of the Abyssinian Baptist Church in New York City. (II:509.)

44. Semple, 128.

had moved from Middlesex County where he had preached for some time. He had been excluded by the Dover Association for continuing to hold meetings after the Association had advised that no person of color should be allowed to preach. On investigation and a favorable report the church was accepted by the Dover Association in 1793.⁴⁵ Pamphlet continued to be received as a delegate until 1808.⁴⁶

Davenport's (later Old Shop and Oakland, now Czechoslovak) in Prince George, first listed in the Portsmouth Association minutes of 1792, had a few white members and a number of people of color living in Petersburg. These had built a meeting house in that city and were carrying on their worship regularly through preachers of color.⁴⁷ When they were admitted by the Portsmouth Association in 1810 as "Petersburg" (later Sandy Beach, now Gillfield) they reported a membership of 270, predominantly free people of color.

The Dover Association in 1813 admitted "a church of coloured people in Charles City County called Elam." Abram Brown was its pastor and often a delegate to the Association for ten years.

Among the queries sent up to the associations were many that had to do with the Negro members of the churches. The Strawberry Association in 1792 referred to the General Committee a query about the remarriage of slaves who had been separated by a great distance against their will.⁴⁸ When a like query came to the Portsmouth Association in 1793 it was referred to a committee of which David Barrow was chairman. It was brought back to the Association in this form: "What ought churches to do with members who shall either directly or indirectly separate married slaves?" "This was thought by

45. Semple, 114, 97.

46. Probably his death, Semple, 115.

47. Semple, 361.

48. There is no mention of this query in the minutes of the General Committee.

a majority to be so difficult that no answer could be given," and it was ordered by the Association to be expunged.

To the query: "Is there no restriction on believing masters in the chastisement of their servants?" the Dover Association in 1796 replied: "There is no doubt that masters may and sometimes do exercise an unreasonable authority. . . . The churches should deal with the transgressors as they would with offenders in other crimes."

The Roanoke Association in 1797 advised that as the black members could not attend business meetings on Saturdays, the church set apart a Sunday in each month to regulate all disorders among them.

Decline of the General Committee

Although its conclusions were only advisory for the general good, the activity of the General Committee in considering questions referred to it by the associations or originating in itself was the ground of opposition to it by some who professed fear that it might over-ride the district associations. To calm this uneasiness the Committee in 1791 decided that its design was only to consider religious-political grievances and take proper measures for redressing them. It struck out of its "plan of government" the consideration of references from the associations. In its Circular Letter that year it wrote:

Look not upon us, we beseech you, as your spiritual head. We disclaim all such power over the associations or churches. We desire you to view us, only as your political mouth, to speak in your cause to the State Legislature, to promote the interest of the Baptists at large, and endeavour the removal of every vestige of oppression. In the prosecution of this service, which we know was your original design in sending us here, we are determined to exert every nerve.

At its meeting in 1792 the Committee reconsidered this action, but its rising usefulness had been so cramped that it

declined from this time.⁴⁹ For this reason, as well as because its original purpose of bringing about complete separation of church and state in Virginia had been achieved, the General Committee in 1799 dissolved.

Publications

During this period several books by Baptist authors came from the press in Virginia. In 1790 Richard and Andrew Broaddus of Caroline County published a *Collection of Sacred Ballads*. In 1790 John Leland's *Virginia Chronicle* was printed in Fredericksburg.

In 1791 John Asplund, then a resident of Southampton County where he was ordained, had printed in Richmond⁵⁰ the first edition of *The Annual Register of the Baptist Denomination in North America*.⁵¹ Under each state he listed the churches by counties and gave the association to which each belonged, the year when constituted, the names of the ministers and licentiates and the number of members, so far as he could obtain the information. The total for Virginia was 204 churches with 20,443 members, served by 150 ordained and 112 licensed preachers. Asplund's work received in 1792 the approbation of the General Committee and its thanks for his offer to give each church a copy.

In 1793 the Committee recommended *Hymns and Spiritual Songs* by Eleazer Clay, published in Richmond.

49. Semple, 80,84.

50. See preface to 1796 edition.

51. In the preface he stated that he was a Swede, brought up to merchandising and accustomed to keeping accounts, and now preferred "accounts of souls with their faces set Zionward, to those who only respect money or trade." To collect the data he travelled "about 7,000 miles in about 18 months, chiefly on foot." His principal design "was to make the Baptists better acquainted with each other." He published a second *Register* in Boston in 1794; and a third in 1796, with the data for 1794 and 1795, in Hanover, New Hampshire, where he "had resolved to spend a few years at the College in order to acquire a Liberal Education." He removed to Maryland where he was drowned in 1807.

District Associations Multiply

In the fifteen years following the end of the war, ten associations and eighty churches were organized. By 1784 the Salisbury Association had been formed by the churches on the Eastern Shore of Virginia, Maryland and Delaware.⁵²

In 1786 the Holston Association was formed by seven churches in southwest Virginia and Tennessee.⁵³ Tidence Lane was moderator; William Murphy, clerk. Its "Plan of Association on Holstien's River, October 30th, 1786" was:

1st. We hold it necessary to associate together in council in order to give counsel to the respective churches that compose this Association, in order to maintain our Christian fellowship.

2nd. Not as a legislative body to impose laws or exercise any supremacy, each church being an independent body.

3rd. We are not an association of ministers, but of churches, each church being represented by her own delegates freely chosen.

4th. Whereas a church is constituted externally by the parties entering into mutual agreement in writing to maintain the worship of God, according to Gospel order: and referring to the Articles of their faith: so churches by their delegates constitute themselves an Association by the confession of their faith maintained to each other.

In necessariis, Unitas
In nonnecessariis, Lenitas,
In omnibus, Charitas.

In the first session the business consisted of "giving counsel"—answering queries sent by the churches. Later their work was extended by appointing advisory committees to labor with churches in settling difficulties and in advising on points of doctrine, church discipline, the duties of deacons and qualifications of deacons' wives. They decided in favor of laying hands

52. Asplund (1791), 50. Semple, 280.

53. Asplund (1791), 52, 40. Semple listed ten churches in Washington County, Virginia, belonging to the Holston Association in 1810.

on the baptized and that foot-washing was a church ordinance, but each church exercised its liberty in these matters. They did not believe that a man possessed of a ministerial function should hold a civil office, and advised against parting married slaves.⁵⁴

In 1788 the Roanoke Association⁵⁵ was organized with 21 churches that had belonged to the Middle District, most of them in Halifax and Pittsylvania. Samuel Harris was moderator and John Williams, clerk. It adopted in 1790 an "Abstract of our Principles" in twenty articles, drawn by John Williams, "consistent with the Sentiments of all orthodox Baptists and with that Confession of Faith adopted by the General Committee at the time of the union."

In 1790 the Kehukee Association, which numbered 61 churches in North Carolina and Virginia, agreed to divide for convenience along the line between the states. The 19 churches in Virginia formed in 1791 the Virginia-Portsmouth Association.⁵⁶

The Orange Association in 1791 divided into the Goshen, the Albemarle and the Culpeper.⁵⁷ They held their first meetings the following year.⁵⁸

In 1793 the Strawberry Association divided. The churches west of the Blue Ridge formed the New River, and in 1798 the Strawberry contributed churches to form the Mayo Association,⁵⁹ which included adjacent churches in North Carolina.

In 1799 three churches in Virginia with others in North Carolina and Tennessee went into the organization of the Mountain Association.⁶⁰

54. Tindell, *Holston Association of Baptists*.

55. Roanoke Ms. minutes. Called Pittsylvania since 1923.

56. Portsmouth Minutes, 1791.

57. Called Shiloh since 1812.

58. Semple, 142, 169, 175.

59. Strawberry Ms. Minutes.

60. Semple, 275, 278.

THE PERIOD OF THE General Meeting of Correspondence 1800 - 1822

AT its final meeting in 1799 the General Committee appointed a meeting of representatives of the district associations the next year to revise the Confession of Faith. It also recommended to the associations the expediency of a general annual meeting for preserving union and harmony amongst the churches.

The Attempt to Adopt a Confession of Faith

In 1800 delegates from several associations met at Lyle's to undertake a revision of the Philadelphia Confession of Faith. This had been adopted conditionally by the General Association in 1783, and with the same conditions by the General Committee as a basis of union in 1787. The work was continued at DuPuy's in 1801 and completed at Muddy Creek in 1802. It was referred to the district associations, which were asked to report their approval or disapproval at a special convention to be held at Licking Hole (Smyrna) in 1804.¹

The Ketocton Association, which had proposed the revision, approved it "without a dissenting voice."² The Roanoke Association found "the amendments and alterations much for the better."³

1. Middle District Minutes, October, 1880. Ketocton Minutes, 1802. Roanoke Ms. Minutes, I, 192.

2. Ketocton Minutes, 1803.

3. Ms. Minutes, I, 202.

The Dover was "of opinion there is no necessity for any changes, as we cannot expect a perfect agreement of opinion upon every point."⁴ The Middle District, Portsmouth and Strawberry associations took no action.

Only five associations sent messengers in 1804 and but four of these approved the revision. As this action lacked a majority of the nine district associations the convention dissolved permanently.⁵

The Kettocton Association, assisted financially by the Culpeper,⁶ published in 1806 its revision as: *The Baptist Declaration of Faith. Revised and Adapted by Several District Associations of the United Baptists in Virginia.*

The preface reads:

At an early period, when Baptist Churches were first constituted in Virginia, the Philadelphia Baptist Confession of Faith was adapted by us, as the best human system, and most consistent with the sacred Scriptures, of any we were acquainted with. But upon frequent perusal, and strict examination; it has been thought by us that a revision was necessary—which was set about a few years past and is now accomplished. It will be found upon perusal, that we meant not to erase, or extirpate, those essential, and soul interesting doctrines contained in that little book, but to cast them into a form more consistent with our ideas of the Holy Scriptures: by altering certain phrases—by abridging some articles that were unnecessarily lengthened out, and by expunging others, as not being of that importance which would constitute them articles of Faith. But still retain the idea, that human compositions will have their imperfections—and will not carry the features of infallibility; we therefore, in point of doctrine, and dis-

4. Minutes, 1803, 1804.

5. Report of William Fristoe to Kettocton Association in Minutes, 1804.

6. Kettocton Minutes, 1804. Culpeper Minutes, 1804, 1805, 1806. The Goshen whose delegates failed to attend the convention at Licking Hole, resolved "that if our Kettocton brethren are disposed to print the confession of faith with the proposed amendments, we have no objections, provided no essential article be altered, and to be considered in the same point of view as agreed on at the time the general union commenced." (Minutes, 1804.) The clerk was directed to inform Jeremiah Moore of the Kettocton Association "that this Association is unwilling to have her name affixed to the title page." (Goshen Minutes, 1805.)

cipline in the Churches, appeal to divine revelation only as the proper source of information and the infallible rule of Faith and Practice. We therefore only hold out this little revised system as expressive of our religious opinions; and recommend it to the perusal of our Brethren and Friends.

Of the thirty-four chapters of the Philadelphia Confession thirteen were unchanged, three slightly and eleven much abbreviated, four rewritten, three entirely omitted and one (on Regeneration) inserted. "Laying on of Hands after Baptism," which had been inserted in the London Confession when it was adopted by the Philadelphia Association, had fallen into disuse in Virginia after the Great Revival and was not included in the "Declaration."⁷

This was the final attempt at the adoption of a general confession of faith by all Virginia Baptists.

A General Meeting of Correspondence

By a large majority the convention at Lyle's in 1800 favored a General Meeting and resolved:

1st. That a meeting be established by the several associations within this state, under the title of the General Meeting of Correspondence of the United Baptist Associations in Virginia.

2. That this meeting shall be composed of not more than four delegates from each association, and that they shall meet once in every year, at such time and place, as a majority shall direct.

3. Each association shall send annually by the hand of their messenger or messengers, a copy of their minutes, or a sketch of any remarkable circumstances which they shall think would be of general utility to the general meeting of correspondence.

4. The general meeting of correspondence shall annually print in numbers, such part or parts of minutes from the several associations, or any other matter sent them by the associations, as a majority of them may think will tend to promote the interest of religion, & the harmony of the Baptists.

7. Semple, 55, 302. Kettocton Minutes, 1802.

5. The expense attending the printing of the first number of the proceedings of the general meeting of correspondence (which shall not exceed 30 octavo pages) shall be defrayed by the associations, and afterwards by the profits arising from the sale of the work itself: In case the money arising from the sale of the proceedings of the general meeting of correspondence, should be more than sufficient to meet the necessary expenses attending the meeting of general correspondence, the said surplus of money shall be deposited as a fund in the hands of a treasurer of the said meeting, to be disposed of from time to time as a majority of them shall direct.

6. This general meeting of correspondence shall have no power to concern with any matter which may have a tendency either directly or indirectly, to infringe the liberties of the associations or churches.

7. They may attend to any political grievance involving the rights of conscience, whenever any association may direct them so to do, but not unless they shall be so directed.

8. This plan of a meeting of general correspondence shall be carried into effect when two thirds of the associations give their assent thereto, and shall always be liable to be dissolved whenever a majority of the associations shall deem its existence dangerous to the happiness and interest of religion.

The Convention recommended that at its next meeting the associations make known their opinions on the subject and plan proposed.⁸

“The great jealousy which had been expressed by the associations respecting the General Committee put the Convention so much upon their guard, that in forming the Constitution they almost gave them nothing to do.” “But few could be found willing to travel long distances without having any other business, except that of seeing each other, and communicating the good or evil tidings, which everyone brought with him.”⁹

At the convention at Muddy Creek in 1802 a majority of the delegates from seven associations rejected the plan of correspondence as “desirable but not attainable.”¹⁰

8. Middle District Minutes, 1800.

9. Semple, 87.

10. Culpeper Ms. Minutes, 1802.

But "the advantages resulting from a general intercourse of the associations in Virginia were so obvious that its friends were willing to have a meeting upon any terms which would accomplish that end."¹¹ The Dover invited such other associations as were friendly toward having a meeting of correspondence to come together.¹² Only the Goshen responded. The delegates from these two associations met at Williams' in Goochland in 1803 and adopted the constitution proposed at Lyle's in 1800 with omission of articles 6 and 7.¹³

In 1804 they were joined by the Albemarle and in 1807 by the Appomattox. The meeting that year formed a new constitution, "such as they believe to be for the good of the cause, and not merely with a view to adapting it to the suspicious minds of a few leading characters, who were perhaps actuated from upright though mistaken motives." By this constitution they could take up any matter, previously decided on in any association.¹⁴

Fifteen delegates from the Albemarle, Appomattox, Dover, Goshen, Meherrin and Roanoke met in 1808. William Webber, who had been moderator from the first session until his fatal illness in 1807, had died. Robert B. Semple (1769-1831) was chosen moderator and Reuben Ford, clerk. These positions they held with a few intermissions until the General Meeting of Correspondence was replaced in 1823 by the General Association.

Letters to Jefferson

At this session of the Meeting of Correspondence it was unanimously agreed to unite with the Dover Association in presenting an address of approbation to President Thomas

11. Semple, 87.

12. Dover Minutes, 1802.

13. Ms. Minutes, 1803.

14. Semple, 87-8. Printed with the Minutes of the Meeting of Correspondence, 1810.

Jefferson who was about to retire from public life. Jefferson's reply, in part, was:

Washington, November 21, 1808.

Thank you, fellow citizens, for your affectionate address, and I received with satisfaction your approbation of my motives for retirement. In reviewing the history of the times through which we have passed, no portion of it gives greater satisfaction, on reflection, than that which presents the efforts of the friends of religious freedom, and the success with which they were crowned. We have solved by fair experiment the great and interesting question whether freedom of religion is compatible with order in government, and obedience to the laws. And we have experienced the quiet as well as the comfort which results from leaving everyone to profess freely and openly those principles of religion which are the inductions of his own reason, and the serious convictions of his own inquiries.¹⁵

In reply to the "affectionate address" of the Ketocton Baptist Association, Jefferson wrote on October 18, 1808, in part:

In our early struggles for liberty, religious freedom could not fail to become a primary object. All men felt the right, and a just animation to obtain it was excited in all. And although your favor selected me as the organ of your petition to abolish the religious domination of a privileged church, yet I was but one of the many who befriended its object and am entitled but in common with them to a portion of that approbation which follows the fulfillment of a duty.¹⁶

A similar address from the Appomattox Association, drawn by Abner Watkins and Bernard Todd and sent by the hand of John Randolph, and Jefferson's reply were printed in the *Richmond Enquirer*, March 4, 1808.¹⁷

15. Lipscomb, *Writings of Jefferson*, XVI, 320.

16. Lipscomb, *Writings of Jefferson*, XVI, 319.

17. Lipscomb, *Writings of Jefferson*, XVI, 298

The Buck Mountain Church, near Monticello, sent its greetings:

March 19, 1809

Albemarle Buckmountain Baptist Church
Sendeth greetings to our much esteemed friend,
Mr. Thomas Jefferson.

Dear Sir,

We Congratulate you in your Return home from your labour and painful service of eight years, now to take some hours of retirement and rest, Enjoying at pleasure the Company of your loving Friends and neighbors. Not that We are weary or Dissatisfied, with your Conduct, but were well pleased; for which Be pleas'd to accept of these our Kind Thanks. May your Days be many and Comfortable. In a word (may we say) we wish you health, wealth and prosperity through life, and in the world to Come life everlasting.

Signed by order of the Church.

GEORGE TWYMAN, *clerk*

Jefferson replied:

I thank you, my friends and neighbors, for your kind congratulations on my return to my native home, and of the opportunities it will give me of enjoying, amidst your affections, the comforts of retirement and rest. Your approbation of my conduct is the more valued as you have known me, and is an ample reward for any services I may have rendered. We have acted together from the origin to the end of a memorable Revolution, and we have contributed each in the line allotted to us our endeavors to render its issues a permanent blessing to our country. That our social intercourse may, to the evening of our days, be cheered and cemented by witnessing the freedom and happiness for which we have labored, will be my constant prayer.¹⁸

The Church Minute Book records:

First Sunday in May, 1809.

Mr. Jefferson's reply to the address that was sent him from this church was read in public and recommended to be sent with the address to the Public printer's office to be printed.

GEORGE TWYMAN, *Clerk*.

18. Lipscomb, *Writings of Jefferson*, XVI, 363.

It was this church, organized in 1773 as "Albemarle," called "Buck Mountain," 1801-33, and "Chestnut Grove" since, which tradition says Jefferson pronounced "an admirable model for a Republic."¹⁹

Human Learning

In 1807 the Staunton River Church in Charlotte sent to the Roanoke Association the query:

Is it a maxim firmly established among the Baptists that "Human learning is of no use"?

This was occasioned by a letter from John H. Rice, a Presbyterian minister in Charlotte, in the Assembly's Missionary Magazine, in which he made the assertion. The Association answered:

It is not a maxim amongst us. On the contrary we esteem human learning as very useful and beneficial in its proper place. Which letter we look upon to be a misrepresentation of the Baptists in Charlotte and its vicinity.

A committee headed by John Kerr (1782-1842)²⁰ was appointed to prepare and publish a reply. This was reissued by the Meeting of Correspondence in its Circular Letter in 1808. It reads, in part:

Indulge us in a few remarks upon the utility of Human Learning, offered with a view to exonerate the Baptists from the charge of holding it as a principle, that it is of no use. While on the one hand we do not wish to substitute human learning in the place of more valuable things, nor appreciate it more highly than it deserves; on the other, we are erroneously charged with holding it as an established principle, that it is of no use. To true religion human learning serves handsomely

19. Turpin, *Albemarle Association*. For other versions see *The Baptist Guardian*, May 1, 1848, and L. A. Alderson in the *Religious Herald*, April 6, 1871.

20. Pastor in Halifax County. After service in the United States House of Representatives he was pastor of the First Baptist Church of Richmond, 1825-33.

as a handmaid; but when this handmaid becomes heir to her mistress, the church is disquieted.

That education has not been despised by the Baptists, is obvious from the following proofs:

As early as the year 1789, a plan was introduced into the Baptist General Committee for the erection of a seminary of learning: this plan originated with the Rev'd. John Williams of Charlotte. During the space of 7 or more years, every effort was made to erect so desirable an object. Trustees were appointed, subscriptions opened and circulated, the plan for the incorporation of a distant college sent for and obtained, & indeed, every other measure adopted, which it was supposed could procure success. For the want of funds, and for no other cause, it finally failed.

The Baptists in Virginia are in communion with those of the other states in the union: it is, therefore, not presumable that they would differ from them. One of the most flourishing colleges in America is the Baptist College of Providence in Rhode Island.

The Baptist writers on divinity in England rank high in the republic of letters. Some of their writings have been republished by the Presbyterians in America. Between the Baptists in England and Virginia there is likewise complete harmony and friendship.

We solemnly declare, that from a general acquaintance among our brethren in the different parts of the state, it is our serious opinion that nine tenths of them value human learning among the most precious of mere earthly things.

At the Meeting of Corespondence in 1809 Semple and Kerr were appointed to procure information on the means of advancing the education of young ministers. In 1810 Semple reported that he had written to John Rippon in London, but had, as yet, no reply. Semple, Andrew Broaddus and Absalom Waller (1772-1820) were appointed to prepare a plan for raising funds for this purpose, with a statement of its design, and to send it to the associations for an expression of their sentiments.²¹

21. There is no mention of this matter in the minutes of any district association, except the Roanoke. In 1810 it referred the subject to the churches. They expressed a willingness for the Meeting of Correspondence to draft a plan. There was no Meeting of Correspondence in 1811. No minutes for 1812 and 1813 are known

Publications

During this decade there were publications which had wide circulation. *A Concise History of the Kehukee Baptist Association* by Lemuel Burkitt and Jesse Read was published in 1803. It contained sketches of the twenty-three churches then constituting the Virginia Portsmouth Association. Nineteen of these had been members of the Kehukee before its division along state lines in 1791. "The List of Subscribers" includes the names and counties of 101 Virginians.

A Collection of Hymns and Spiritual Songs, selected by John Courtney, Sen., pastor of the First Baptist Church of Richmond, 1788-1824, was printed by John Courtney, Jun., in 1805.

David and Goliath or a treatise on Water Baptism by Josiah Osborne, pastor of Big Levels in Greenbrier County, was published in 1807.

In 1808 William Fristoe's *History of the Kettocton Baptist Association* came from the press.²²

A Catechism for the Religious Instruction of Children by Robert B. Semple, published in 1809, had been prepared by appointment of the Dover Association in 1796. A majority of that body endorsed its use. Strong opposition was based on the claim that it was unnecessary and lessened the dignity of the Scriptures, which were sufficient. The Meeting of Correspondence recommended it unanimously.²³

In 1815 there came from the press *A Selection of Hymns and Spiritual Songs* by George C. Sedwick (1785-1864)²⁴ and in 1816, *A Bible History for Schools and Families* by Andrew Broaddus (1770-1848).²⁵

22. At the meetnig of the Association in 1812 Fristoe lamented that for want of proper documents several churches were not mentioned and that there were many typographical errors (Minutes, 5).

23. Semple, 106. Taylor, J. B., *Virginia Baptist Ministers* (1837), 256.

24. Sedwick was pastor of Rock Hill and Chappawamsic in Stafford. From 1817 he was pastor in Winchester, where he conducted a Female Seminary until he moved to Ohio in 1820.

25. Andrew Broaddus, I, scholar, writer, poet, painter, preacher; his son, Andrew Broaddus, Jr. (1818-1900), and his grandson, Andrew Broaddus, III (1853-1926), were in succession pastors of Salem in Caroline for more than a century (1820-1926).

Semple's History

Most notable was *A History of the Rise and Progress of the Baptists in Virginia* by Robert Baylor Semple, published in 1810. This was the consummation of a desire expressed by the General Association in 1787 and was taken up by the General Committee in 1788. Semple's work is remarkable in comprehensiveness and accuracy.²⁶ Besides accounts of the General, Regular and Separate Baptist groups in Virginia, their persecutions, the successful struggle for religious liberty and the separation of Church and State, the first Separate Association, the General Committee and the General Meeting of Correspondence, there are sketches of nineteen district associations and 287 churches,²⁷ lengthier biographies of 22 "distinguished Baptist preachers, who lived and died faithful in the cause of God," and a briefer mention of 386 other ministers, 23 laymen and four women.²⁸ Most of them are characterized, always with

26. Semple mentions as sources: Leland's *Virginia Chronicle*; Asplund's *Register*, 1791; Backus' *Church History of New England*, V. 3; Burkitt and Read's *History of the Kehukee Association*; Fristoe's *History of the Ketocton Association*. Manuscript accounts from John Alderson, Jr., Isaac Backus, Elijah Craig, John Leland, Josiah Osburne, James Read, William Richards, John Waller, John Williams, and Allen Wyley. Minutes of Associations.

In the preface, Semple discusses the documents which were before him and lists the names of William Mason of Culpeper, John Poindexter of Louisa, A. Waller of Spotsylvania, William Brame of Richmond City, Benjamin Watkins of Powhatan, William Richards of Mecklenburg, Josiah Osburne and John Alderson of Greenbrier, William Howard of Montgomery, John Jenkins of Pittsylvania, Jeremiah Moore of Fairfax and Thomas Buck of Frederick, from whom "prompt and friendly aid was afforded."

27. The accounts from one other association, Mayo, which included seven Virginia churches in its membership had "not come to hand." (p. 445.)

28. The laymen mentioned were: Adam Banks (p. 180), Thomas Buck (pp. 304, 320), Robert Carter (p. 134), B. Chowning (p. 120), John Clopton (p. 114), William Costen (p. 281), Francis Crutchfield (p. 327), John Delaney (p. 180), Joseph Early (p. 181), Silas Hart (p. 192), John Hamerstly (p. 344), Edward Herndon (p. 120), Thomas Jones (p. 160), Doctor Robert Lemon (p. 281), Captain Joseph Pierce (p. 133), John Sadler (p. 126), Joseph Saunders (p. 230), Richard Street (p. 126), Thomas Waford (p. 162), Joseph Williams (p. 225), Matthew Woodson (p. 108), Charles Woolfolk (p. 160), Allen Wyley (pp. 7, 293). The women were: Mrs. Martha Stearns Marshall (p. 374), Mrs. Joseph Pierce (p. 131), Mrs. Elizabeth Steptoe (p. 134), Mrs. Sucket (p. 135).

candor. They include 20 ministers whose misbehavior and downfall he records as "a warning to the unwary."²⁹ The few errors are generally the printer's.³⁰

Semple estimated the total number of Baptists in Virginia in 1810 as thirty-one thousand and fifty-two, an increase from the figures given in Asplund's *Register* of 1791 of more than fifty percent in nineteen years. This was despite the removal during this period of more than one-fourth ("as has been supposed") of the Baptists of Virginia to Kentucky and other parts of the "western country."³¹

Against this general increase of the Baptists in the State as a whole, Semple noted a decline in their predominance in most parts of the Kectocon Association, where the lead had been taken by the Methodists, who had greatly outstripped other denominations in most of the large towns, and on the Eastern Shore, where the Baptists had suffered from a succession of

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29. Preachers whose downfall is noted: Aaron Bledsoe, "fraudulent dealing" (p. 168); Thomas Bridges, "horse stealing" (p. 155); Cary, "imposter" (p. 287); Doctor Thomas Chisman, "yielding to temptations of the most diabolical sort" (p. 116); Benjamin Coleman, "misconduct" (p. 172); Samuel Counsel, "bad life" (p. 287); Obadiah Echols, "gross immorality" (p. 250); Joseph Flood, "bigamy" (p. 287); Moses Foley, "misconduct" (p. 277); Samuel Goodwin, "intemperate drinking." ("He, until that time, had borne a most amiable character for piety and integrity; and was esteemed an excellent preacher, and very active and useful. Gracious heaven! how many thousands of the professed Sons of Zion are overturned by this deadly evil!") (p. 274); Nathan Hall, "misconduct" (p. 272); Philip Hughes, "his candle went out in darkness" (p. 397n.); John McLeroy, "wretched traitor to the cause" (p. 214); William Moorman, neglected "to keep his body under" (p. 264); George Morris, "charged with crimes of the deepest dye" (p. 116); Younger Pitts, "disorderly" (p. 112); James Read, "downfall" (p. 402); James Tompkins "malconduct" (p. 239); Jeremiah Walker, "criminal intrigue" (pp. 388-9); "The Pastor of Fork Church," "misconduct" (p. 173).
30. Errors in Semple: Page 23, line 4, "four" should be *three*; page 46, line 6, "Garret" should be *Garrard*; page 76, line 34, "1778" should be *1788*; page 303, line 35, "1787" should be *1797*; page 314, line 13, "1800" should be *1808*; page 327, line 9, "1807" should be *1801*.
31. Semple, 446. Semple called Kentucky "the vortex of the Baptist preachers" (p. 172) and "the cemetery of Virginia Baptist preachers" (p. 354), "lost through the fertility of Kentucky soil" (p. 202). "It is questionable whether half the Baptist preachers who have been raised in Virginia have not emigrated to the western country." (p. 172n.)

imposters in the ministry.³² The Great Revival did not produce as many young ministers as might have been expected and the shortage was acute in the Kettocton.³³ Preachers and their hearers had found a relish for diving deeply into speculations about the mysteries of the Gospel. "To tell, or to make a plausible guess, about what happened before the world was made; or what will happen before it shall end; looked more wise, and excited more applause, than to travel on in the old track." "Some of the preachers, falling into the Arminian scheme, stirred up no small disputation."³⁴ "Some were thought to have pushed the Calvinistic scheme to an Antinomian extreme."³⁵

Questions About Church Expenses, Rebaptism and Church Covenants

When the Kettocton Association was consulted in 1791 as to the propriety of a church's requiring of each of her members to contribute to the expenses of the church according to his property, it decided "that a regulation of that kind in a church was lawful, and that persons that would not submit to it deserved to be excluded from the privileges of the church." Semple's comment was:

It was easy for the church to ask, and for the association to give her advice, the correctness of which cannot be doubted on right principles. But it was not quite so easy to execute. The attempt was made in some of the churches but, in consequence of the violent opposition it met with, they desisted from it.³⁶

The Kettocton Association had decided in 1791 that rebaptism was necessary for the reception of one who had been bap-

32. Semple, 285.

33. Semple, 38. Fristoe deplored that, "Our preachers are very few and generally advanced in age. (p. 14.)

35. Semple, 83. Webster defines Antinomian as "one who holds that under the gospel dispensation, the moral law is of no use or obligation, on the ground that faith alone is necessary to salvation."

36. Semple, 303.

tized on his profession of faith by a Methodist minister who had not himself been immersed. Semple said:

Their proceeding on this occasion was more strict than that of any other association upon the same subject. The question has been before most of the associations at one time or another; and in every other instance they either deemed it unnecessary to rebaptize, or left it to the conscience of the party to be rebaptized or not. The arguments were: That the most important prerequisite to baptism was faith in the subject. That, although it was expedient to have a fixed rule for qualifying persons for the administration of the ordinances, yet the want of such qualifications in the administrator ought not to be viewed as having sufficient weight to invalidate the baptism. On the other hand it was argued: That if such baptism was sanctioned everything like ordination might be dispensed with. That, ordination was not only expedient, but an institution in the Bible, and therefore indispensable. That such proceedings, if allowed, might go to great lengths and, ultimately, produce confusion.³⁷

The Dover Association in 1803 answered in the negative a query: "Is it scriptural to rebaptize a person who has previously been baptized by immersion upon professing of faith?" In the case of persons who had been baptized by ministers of "the Christian Church"³⁸ it reaffirmed in 1811 its earlier answer. In 1815, in reply to a query about persons baptized by other than regular ordained Baptist ministers, the Association was still of its former opinion, "that when baptism is administered in a solemn manner, in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, to a Believer, by immersion, it is essentially right, although there may be some circumstance as to the administrator which may not be correct."

The Goshen Association in 1805 recommended that persons "baptized by a minister whom they knew to be in disorder and excluded . . . be examined as to their experience and conduct

37. Semple, 302.

38. Separated from the Methodist Episcopal Church under the leadership of James O'Kelley.

and be received or rejected accordingly, without being baptized again.”

The Strawberry Association in 1806 answered a similar query as to the need of rebaptism in the negative, “provided the same is done agreeable to the Baptist faith and order.”

The Strawberry in 1799 received a challenge to a prevalent custom in a query from Pig River Church: “Is it Scriptural for a church to have a written covenant?” The Association answered:

We cannot find any positive Scripture to Confirm a written Covenant. But advise every Church in this Respect to act agreeable to their Light and Scripture. But to be very Careful not to occasion Rents or divisions in churches.

New District Associations

For the greater convenience of the increasing number of churches five new associations were constituted in the first decade of the nineteenth century. The Greenbrier was formed from the New River in 1801 with four churches in Greenbrier, Kanawha and Monroe counties. John Alderson, Jr., was generally moderator. Josiah Osbourne, the first clerk, was succeeded by Francis Crutchfield,³⁹ “one of the most accomplished scholars of that day, who had acquired a widespread reputation as an educator.”⁴⁰

In 1804 the Red Stone dismissed nine churches in Harrison, Randolph and Monongalia to form the Union Association.⁴¹

The Middle District in 1803 notified the Portsmouth and Roanoke associations of its desire to consult on making each district more compact. The result of the meeting, was a decision to organize two new associations. In 1804 messengers from twelve churches in Brunswick, Charlotte, Dinwiddie,

39. Semple, 327.

40. L. A. Alderson, in *Religious Herald*, September 25, 1879.

41. Semple, 336.

Lunenburg and Mecklenburg formed the Meherrin Association. William Richards (1763-1837), who was elected moderator, continued to fill that office for more than a score of years. Joseph Saunders, a layman in Reedy Creek in Brunswick County was elected clerk and re-elected annually until he moved from the Association in 1823.⁴² Burkitt and Read characterized him as "remarkable for virtue, piety and usefulness."

The Meherrin affirmed as its "Abstract of Principles" the substance of the Philadelphia Confession as adopted by the Roanoke Association in 1790. Semple's comment was:

To exhibit something of this sort, as a specimen of their principles, is a proof of wisdom in a religious assembly. To wish to give it the authority of holy writ, or to ascribe to it any thing like infallibility, is the absurdest folly and superstition.⁴³

Twelve churches in Amelia, Buckingham, Campbell, Charlotte and Prince Edward were represented at a meeting at Sailor Creek in 1805, which organized the Appomattox Association. Rane Chastain, who was the first moderator, and Bernard Todd, the first clerk, were re-elected repeatedly.

The Salisbury Association had included all the churches on the Eastern Shore of both Maryland and Virginia. On their petition the seven churches in Virginia were dismissed and formed in 1809, the Accomack Association. Their total membership was 891. George Layfield (1749-1814) was moderator and William Costen, clerk.⁴⁴

Revivals

In 1811 a notable revival began in Upper Essex and Upper King and Queen churches under the leadership of their veteran pastor, Theodorick Noel. It spread through adjoining counties

42. "The Late Clerk's Farewell Address, in Meherrin Minutes, 1823.

43. Semple, 220.

44. Semple, 281.

and associations for several years. The churches of the Dover reported in October, 1811, more than eight hundred additions to their membership during the six months preceding, and in October, 1812, twice as many. The Goshen in the same period gained a thousand members, the Albemarle above four hundred and the Roanoke nearly a thousand.⁴⁵

The Goshen's "Address" for 1812, by Andrew Broaddus, states that in the twenty years since it was organized the number of churches had increased from fifteen, with about 1,600 members, to twenty-one churches with four thousand members — eight hundred received in the last year. Ordained ministers had multiplied from ten to nineteen and there were three licensed preachers.

In the next decade three new associations were organized. The Washington Association was formed in 1811⁴⁶ by eight churches in Washington, Russell and Lee counties, Virginia, dismissed from the Holston. George Brown was chosen moderator and John Moffett, clerk.

Teay's Valley was formed in 1812 by six churches in Cabell, Giles and Kanawha counties that had been members of the Greenbrier Association, but were too remote to attend its meetings.⁴⁷

In 1812 Parkersburg was formed by five churches, three of them dismissed from the Union Association.

45. Letters to the *Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine* from William Brame, III, 275 (1812), from Theodorick Noel, III, 146, 207 (1811) and from Benjamin Watkins, III, 143, (1811). The *Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine* was published in Boston for the Massachusetts Missionary Society, organized in 1802: "For the purpose of sending the gospel into the new settlements and further if his providence should open a door" (I, 9). It was interested in the Tuscarora Indians (I, 116-21).

46. Washington Association Minutes, typed copy.

47. *West Virginia Jubilee*, 44.

THE AWAKENING OF

Interest in Missions

INSTRUCTION OF YOUNG MINISTERS
AND SUNDAY SCHOOLS

1804 - 1823

THE beginning in Virginia of interest in organizations for definite missionary purposes was by the Portsmouth Association in 1804. "Having taken into consideration the expediency of adopting some plan to promote a Missionary System," it authorized its delegates "to act in conjunction with the Kehukee Association, in such matters as they may think advisable to carry the same into effect." In 1805 "the Association, taking into consideration the important object of the convention at Cashee, Bertie County, North Carolina," appointed six to attend and each to be paid \$4 for his service. At this convention was organized the Baptist Philanthropic Missionary Society, whose object was work in the Creek Nation of Indians.¹

Licking Hole sent to the Goshen Association in 1806 the query: "Will this Association favor and recommend a plea for

1. Paschal, I, 547. William Brame presented copies of its minutes to the Dover Association in 1807 and in 1811. Virginia ministers on its Directory in 1810-11 were William Brame, William Creath, William Dorsey, William Hatchett, and Robert Murrell. The meeting in 1812 was appointed for Raccoon Swamp (Antioch) meeting house in Sussex County, Virginia. William Brame, "that zealous and indefatigable servant of the churches," (Portsmouth Minutes, 1810), in addition to extensive travel and preaching brought to a number of associations each year copies of the minutes of the others he had attended. Frequent references to their appreciation of this service are in the minutes of the Dover, Goshen, Middle District, Portsmouth, and Roanoke associations from 1799 to his early death in 1814.

the spread of the Gospel by missionaries?" The Association answered:

This association avails herself of the opportunity of expressing her cordial approbation of such a plan, provided it be found on enquiry to be expedient, and would take the liberty of calling the attention of the sister associations to the subject; and request them to let us hear from them on the business, at our next association.²

The Judsons and Luther Rice

Adoniram Judson (1788-1850), with his wife, Ann Hasseltine (1789-1826), and Luther Rice (1783-1836) were members of the first group of missionaries to India sent in 1812 by New England Congregationalists through the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, which had been organized in 1810. On the long voyage the Judsons began to investigate the subject of baptism by immersion of believers only, as opposed to that of infants. The result was that soon after they reached Calcutta they were baptized and became members of the Baptist church planted by William Carey and his associates from England.³

Rice, on another ship, had a similar experience and after his arrival six weeks later, he became a Baptist.

The question then arose, what were they to do? By following the New Testament they had cut themselves off from the Board that had sent them forth and were strangers in a strange land without means of support for their mission.

They decided that Rice should return to America and tell the Baptists there what had happened and how Providence had thrown on them the care of the mission. The Judsons, denied by the East India Company the privilege of working in India, went to Rangoon in Burma in July, 1813.

2. There is no further reference to this matter.

3. Letter from William Carey to William Staughton, from Calcutta, October 20, 1812, in *Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine*, III, 321.

Rice arrived in New York in September, 1813, went to Boston and told his change of belief about baptism to the Congregationalist Board, and asked to be discharged from its service. The Boston Baptist Foreign Mission Society had already been formed for the support of the Judsons. In conference with it Rice suggested that the Baptists of the entire country be asked to unite in the new undertaking. This was agreed to and Rice went forth to tell the story of the experiences through which he and the Judsons had passed. The larger cities of the Eastern coast from New York to Savannah, including Richmond, were visited and many of the smaller towns. A cordial hearing was given him everywhere. On the way by stagecoach from Richmond to Petersburg a plan of organization suggested itself to his mind. It was, "That of forming one principal society in each state and others auxiliary to that, and by these state societies delegates be appointed to form one general society."⁴

A result of Rice's brief stay in Richmond was the formation there on October 28, 1813, of a Mission Society, the first that he organized in Virginia.⁵

Returning from a trip as far south as Georgia, Rice preached in the Courthouse in Petersburg on February 20, 1814, and took up a collection of \$44.38 $\frac{3}{4}$.⁶ This he credited to the Richmond Baptist Mission Society. By the meeting of the Convention in May the Society had sent \$200 to the general missionary fund and was counted on for \$250 annually. On March 3

4. Rice's letter to Judson. (Jas. B. Taylor, *Memoir of Luther Rice*, 142.)

5. The *Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine*, III, 379 (1813), which had received a copy of its constitution and gave the date of its organization, called it, "The Baptist Mission Society of Virginia." Rice in his first report called it, "The Richmond Baptist Mission Society for propagating the Gospel in India and other Heathen Countries." (Proceedings of Convention.) In his second report Rice listed it as, "The Richmond Baptist Foreign and Domestic Mission Society." (Report of Board.) This name was changed in 1826 to "The Baptist Mission Society of Virginia." (Minutes, 1825 and 1826.)

6. John Holt Rice, first pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in Richmond, who preached stately in the Petersburg Courthouse, gave \$2 and made other contributions "with his usual liberality." (L. Rice's reports to the Board.)

“after preaching an evening lecture in the Baptist meeting house in Fredericksburg” Rice received \$5.37½, and on the 6th a collection by The Fredericksburg Branch Society for Foreign Missions amounted to \$75.51. The Baptist Mission Society of Frederick County, Virginia, was formed on March 25, 1814, and by April had sent \$70 to the Board with its “desire to participate in the glorious work.” William C. Buck (1790-1872) was its Corresponding Secretary.⁷

The General Convention Organized

When thirty-three delegates from eleven states and the District of Columbia met in Philadelphia on May 18, 1814, and organized “The General Missionary Convention of the Baptist Denomination in the United States of America for Foreign Missions,” Robert B. Semple and Jacob Grigg represented the Richmond Society.⁸ Semple was on the committee to draft a constitution and was elected a member of the Board of Commissioners which was located in Philadelphia. The Board took Judson under its care and instructions and appointed Rice “to continue his itinerant services with a view to excite the public mind to engage in Missionary exertions, and to assist in originating Societies for carrying the Missionary design into execution.”

When Semple crossed the Potomac on his way to the Convention he was met by one of the few scattered Baptists on the Maryland shore, who, “having heard that the Richmond Society was for domestic as well as foreign missions determined

7. First Annual Report of the Baptist Board of Foreign Missions, 1814, p. 15. Ketocton Minutes, 1815. The churches then in Frederick County were Bethel, Buck Marsh and Happy Creek. Buck was a licentiate of Water Lick in Shenandoah County. He moved to Kentucky in 1820.

8. Jacob Grigg was conducting a classical school in Richmond. John Bryce (1784-1864), assistant pastor of the church in Richmond, 1810-1820, pastor in Fredericksburg and Alexandria until he moved to Kentucky in 1827, and William Gilmore, who later became a leader in antimissionary activities, were appointed but did not attend.

to request him to endeavor to send them ministerial help." This Semple did on his return, and as "Rice's travels and exertions had produced pretty generally among Virginia Baptists a missionary spirit, little difficulty was found in obtaining the sanction of the Richmond Society or in procuring the necessary funds.⁹

The Society in 1814 sent Samuel L. Straughan (1783-1821) pastor of Morattico and Wicomico in the Northern Neck, an able preacher, on missionary trips to Charles' and St. Mary's counties in Southern Maryland. This engagement was renewed annually until Straughan's death and was continued afterwards with Philip Montague (1776-1852).

On November 23, 1814, Baptist women of Fredericksburg organized The Fredericksburg Female Baptist Society for Foreign Missions. Its explicit intention was "to aid the sister Society for Foreign Missions in Richmond; to which Society the subscription must be forwarded by the Correspondent." Members subscribed at least one dollar annually.¹⁰ This "sister Society" in Richmond was organized in 1813. It held its "17th annual meeting" on November 6, 1830, as noted in the *Religious Herald* the next week.

Reactions of the District Associations

The Dover Association in 1814 received the query: "How far would the Association encourage Gospel Missionaries?" It answered: "We feel hearty in attempts to propagate the Gospel in dark and ignorant places," and appointed Semple to write the next circular letter on that subject.

The minutes of the Goshen in 1814 recorded:

The packet containing the proceedings of the Missionary Convention was opened, and the copies, 20 in number, were sold, at the

9. Semple, *Straughan*, 15.

10. An original printed copy of the minutes of this meeting and of the constitution and organization adopted, is in the Virginia Baptist Historical Society.

Clerk's table, at 25 cents each: and the money, after paying the postage, was deposited in the hands of our Treasurer, for the use of the Missionary Society.

The Circular Letter by William Y. Hiter (1778-1848) concluded:

Great exertions are now making, by christians of various denominations, to spread the excellent knowledge of the Redeemer in different parts of the world. We are called on to unite with them in the glorious work. The fairest opportunities now offer for a display of our zeal. Large fields are open before us in which we may labor. Missionary societies are formed and missionaries are going abroad. Bible societies are also formed. . . . The word of life is translated into many languages. Christian benevolence glows in many hearts. Let our substance be given up to honor the Lord. Let us be zealous of all good works. We have much to do.

But at the meeting of the Shiloh Association in 1814:

The papers handed in by Brother Mason on the subject of the Missionary Institution were not taken up on a decision of the previous question.¹¹

William Creath (1768-1823) presented Rice's letter, with eighteen copies of the minutes of the General Convention, to the Meherrin Association at its meeting in 1815. "The Association agreed to lend their aid in the pleasing and glorious work," and appointed Joseph Saunders as its Corresponding Secretary. James Shelbourne (1738-1820) was appointed to deliver an address to the congregation Sunday, "giving the necessary information," and a collection of \$13.50 was taken. In 1816 Rice was present at the meeting of the Meherrin, "and, as was expected, preached on the subject of missions—('Thy Kingdom Come')." It "had a salutary effect, abundantly manifested by a liberal collection for the support of the Gospel in

11. William Mason, pastor of Mount Poney, was "a warm advocate of the missionary cause from the time it began to be discussed in Virginia." (Jas. B. Taylor, *Virginia Baptist Ministers*, Series I.)

foreign climes." The Association recommended to the churches that they appoint one meeting a year on the subject of missions and take a public collection.

In 1817 the Meherrin requested William Dossey, who had been asked to preach on Sunday, "to say something on the subject of missions after preaching and at the close to take a public collection." This, with contributions sent by Bluestone, Meherrin, Reedy Creek (in Lunenburg) and Sandy Creek churches, amounted to \$77.70. They retained \$50 "for domestic use" and \$27.70 was sent to the Board. In 1818 the Meherrin Association "declined their former course of requesting the aid of the churches" for the cause of missions, "believing that more will be done for so good and glorious a cause by forming societies auxiliary to the Board of Missions for the United States." "With an unusual flow of pleasure" it records such a society in Mecklenburg, "another in Lunenburg, almost organized, and others progressing, which from the number and respectability of the members promised liberal aid." A note to the minutes for 1819 records the annual meeting of missionary societies at Ash Camp and Tussekiah meeting houses.

The Education of Young Ministers

At the meeting of the Meherrin in 1819 the clerk, Joseph Saunders, presented an address from the Board of Missions in Philadelphia on the plan of an institution for "the education of pious young men who, in the judgment of the churches of which they are members and of the Board, possess Gifts and Graces suited to the Gospel Ministry." Bryant W. Lester and Joseph Saunders, laymen, were appointed to solicit donations for this purpose. In 1820 they reported that their hopes were entirely disappointed. They found the pressure of the times an insurmountable bar to success. It was agreed to suspend the matter for the present.

The Roanoke Association in 1815 received a circular letter from Luther Rice requesting it to establish and keep up a correspondence. The Association agreed unanimously and appointed its clerk, John Jenkins (1758-1828), to conduct it. It resolved that it "recommend the forming of a Missionary Society in this district." In 1816 The Roanoke Missionary Society was launched with Reuben Pickett (1752-1823) president and John Jenkins, secretary.¹² It sent to the Board \$100 in 1817 and \$250 in 1818.

The Portsmouth Association, meeting in 1815, was favorable to the matter contained in two circular letters received from Luther Rice, "Agent of the Baptist Board of Foreign Missions for the United States," and appointed James Mitchell to correspond with "that Institution." The churches of the Association were "advised to take the subject into most serious consideration and signify whether this association should resolve itself into a Missionary Society and become a member of the Baptist Board of Foreign Missions, as proposed by their Agent." The Circular Letter was on: "That very important subject of disseminating the good word of life amongst the heathen." It "would affectionately impress on the minds of the churches to join with many thousands who meet together in the afternoon of the first Monday in every month, to hold social prayer for the prosperity of Missionary Institutions."¹³ As it appeared by letters from the churches in 1816 that most of them were "desirous to contribute their aid in support of Gospel Missions," the Association appointed a Convention at South Quay Meeting House for forming a Society for that purpose. The resulting organization was called "The Virginia-Portsmouth Baptist Missionary Society." The minutes of its meeting in May, 1817, list the names of eighty members. Robert Murrell (1755-1826) was president and Jacob Darden (1770-1827) recording secre-

12. They were the moderator and the clerk of the association.

13. The "Concert of Prayer for Missions."

tary.¹⁴ Its "agents" in eight of the twenty-one churches reported \$333.62½, collected since its organization the preceding September. In its earlier years its funds were used to employ Richard Dabbs as missionary in the territory of the Association, particularly in Petersburg, where there was no white Baptist church before Market Street was constituted in 1819.

When Rice's letter was laid before the Strawberry Association in 1815, it appointed its moderator, Joseph Perego, to answer it and "give such information as at present seems advisable."

At the General Meeting of Correspondence in 1815 the Appomattox, Dover, Goshen, Meherrin and Portsmouth associations were represented. It took up "the query from the Dover Association, which respected Missionary Societies," and replied:

With great cordiality we unite with the Dover Association and other associations in recommending and encouraging Missionary Societies. These efforts greatly advance the spread of the Gospel.

The Kettocton Association in 1815 received a letter from Rice by the hand of William C. Buck, Corresponding Secretary of the Missionary Society of Frederick County, accompanied by copies of the Annual Report of the Board. They were distributed among the churches and the Association recommended to them "a serious consideration of the importance of this work." The Circular Letter, written by George C. Sedwick and approved by the Association, was:

Upon the all important subject of endeavoring to spread the knowledge of Jesus in different parts of the world, but more especially in our own country. "Thy Kingdom Come" is a principal article in the Saviour's pattern of prayer: and how inconsiderate we act, to pray for a thing that we never use the means to accomplish. The means are to appropriate a part of your worldly substance to a missionary purpose and to form yourselves into societies or to put forward subscriptions.

14. They were the moderator and the clerk of the Association.

In 1815, the Dover Association received a letter from Luther Rice with copies of the Annual Report of the Board and appointed John Bryce its correspondent. The Circular Letter by Semple discussed the Scripture proof for Gospel Missions and their financial support, since "these measures, like all others requiring money, have met with opposition."

In response to letters from Rice the Albemarle and Appomattox associations in 1815 appointed correspondents, and the clerk of New River sent "a very friendly letter." Greenbrier appointed a "committee on the missionary business" and John Alderson, one of its members, wrote "a very satisfactory letter" to Rice. A member of Mayo sent a friendly letter, as did John Young in Teay's Valley. Accomac sent a copy of its minutes. Only the Middle District, Union and Washington failed to respond.¹⁵

Between the meetings of the Board of the General Convention in 1815 and in 1816, Rice came again to Virginia after tours in twelve other states. He preached on successive Sundays in Wythe County and at the meeting of the Roanoke Baptist Missionary Society. He reached Richmond in time to deliver on April 11, 1816, the annual sermon before the Richmond Female Baptist Mission Society, whose managers "voted to remit to the General Treasurer this year, as usual, \$250."

Rice found that colored members of the Richmond churches had been awakened, largely through the instrumentality of Lott Cary (1790-1828),¹⁶ to a lively interest in the spiritual condition of Africa. In April, 1815, they organized the Richmond African Baptist Missionary Society, whose contributions they wished to go to an African Mission. R. B. Semple was its president, Lott Cary, secretary, and William Crane (1791-1866)¹⁷ was active in its promotion. In his report to the Gen-

15. Rice's report to the Board, 1816. He listed eighteen district associations in Virginia. Thirteen had appointed corresponding secretaries in addition to their clerks.

16. Jas. B. Taylor, *Lott Cary*.

17. William Crane was an active layman in Richmond from 1812 to 1834, when he moved to Baltimore. (G. F. Adams, *William Crane*.)

eral Convention in 1820 Rice listed the receipt of \$483.25 from this society, the first in the whole Union whose support came largely from people of color.

From Richmond Rice went to Fredericksburg and attended on April 12, a meeting of its Foreign and Domestic Missionary Society, which voted to remit \$50 to the General Treasurer. He commented on the "highly gratifying and praiseworthy" activity and zeal of the Female Mission Society in that place; then to the Meherrin, where a public collection of \$100 was taken up for the Mission and "a very laudable zeal was manifested for its promotion"; back to Richmond and "as fast as possible to Philadelphia to render an account to the Board."¹⁸

When "the mission business" was taken up at the meeting of the Kettocton in 1816 the Association was "of the opinion that the work is laudable" and resolved to promote it by recommending to the churches to raise funds to be appropriated as they might think proper or to be left to the discretion of the Association. Thornton Stringfellow (1788-1869)¹⁹ was chosen to correspond with the Board in Philadelphia. Stringfellow stated:

At this session W. C. Buck, George C. Sedwick and myself were the only young ministers present; and we entered into a private agreement that we would urge the duty of sending the Gospel to the heathen. The entire Eldership (all the older ministers) opposed us violently; but we were enabled so to plead the cause of the heathen as to secure a unanimous vote to patronize the Triennial Convention.²⁰

At the next session this fund amounted to \$150.81½, which was directed to be sent by Thomas Buck²¹ to the Board in Philadelphia for a "domestic mission."

18. Report of the Board, 1816.

19. Stringfellow was pastor of Hedgeman's River.

20. Quoted in *Shiloh Minutes*, 1870, p. 13.

21. Thomas Buck, Sr., had been clerk of the Association since 1796. "He, though not a preacher in words, is a preacher in works. He is a rich man." (*Simple*, 320.)

In August, 1816, Rice rode four hundred miles in six days from the meeting in North Carolina of the Mountain Association to the meeting in Culpeper, Virginia, of the Shiloh Association. He was "cordially" invited to preach twice. The question of correspondence with the Board "was decided in the affirmative by a large majority." On motion of Thomas Buck, Jr., the Association recommended Baptist Missions to the churches for "such aid as they may in their liberality be disposed to afford." "As a matter of course, a public collection was taken up for missionary purposes."²²

At the meeting of the Goshen in 1816 the Association "resolved that the General Meeting of Correspondence should be empowered to take such steps as may further Gospel Missions" and advised the churches "to aid the blessed cause of Domestic and Foreign Missions by annual collections." At the suggestion in the letter from the church at Licking Hole, the Association appointed Absalom Waller (1772-1820) its correspondent with the Board. The Dover "cordially agreed that the constitution of the General Meeting of Correspondence shall be amended so as to give them the power to encourage Gospel Missions."

When the Fredericksburg Baptist Foreign and Domestic Missionary Society held its annual meeting in 1816, Absalom Waller was chosen president, Addison M. Lewis (1789-1857),²³ vice-president and William T. Williams, recording secretary. It acknowledged the receipt of \$65.84¼ from Hedgeman's River by the hand of Thornton Stringfellow and \$50 from the Female Baptist Missionary Society in Fredericksburg, the latter "to be applied exclusively to Domestic Missions." Lewis was appointed delegate to the next meeting in May, 1817, of the "General Missionary Convention." He was to bear \$100 for the contribution of the Society to the "General Missionary

22. Report of the Board, 1817. Shiloh Minutes, 1816.

23. Pastor of Massaponax. He moved to Kentucky about 1830.

Fund," and was "instructed to move for an amendment to the Constitution, so as to embrace Domestic as well as Foreign Missions."

Until the Fredericksburg Society could procure a qualified missionary it employed seven ministers belonging to the Society to travel through Fluvanna, to Port Royal, into Calvert County, Maryland, and other destitute places for sixteen weeks with compensation of \$8 a week and all reasonable expenses.²⁴

Rice visited the Greenbrier and found "an excellent spirit for missions displayed." The Washington Association appointed Elijah Gillenwaters, its clerk from 1812 to 1827, to write a letter to the Board and to receive and pay to the Board "all monies contributed for the support of the plan of Foreign Missionaries."

The Convention of 1817

At the "first triennial meeting" of the General Convention in Philadelphia, May, 1817, the Richmond Society was represented by Semple and Edward Baptist (1790-1863).²⁵ Rice and James Fife (1794-1876)²⁶ represented the Richmond Female Society. Addison M. Lewis represented the Fredericksburg Female Society. Baptist and Semple were elected members of the Board and Semple its second vice-president. The constitution of the Convention was amended to give the Board power to appropriate a portion of its funds to domestic missionary purposes, and from a "competent and distinct fund to institute a Classical and Theological Seminary to aid pious young men who possess gifts and graces suited to the Gospel ministry."

24. The members of the Society were not limited to Fredericksburg but included pastors and laymen of various churches in the Goshen and Kettocton Association.

25. Baptist was pastor of Grubb Hill (Mt. Tabor) in the Appomattox Association until he moved to Alabama in 1835.

26. James Fife was pastor of Licking Hole, Perkins, Williams, and South Anna in the Goshen Association.

The Convention received a letter from the corresponding secretary of the Richmond African Baptist Mission Society and "resolved unanimously that the Board, if they find it agreeable, institute an African Mission conformably to the wishes of the Society." The treasurer of the Board recorded the receipt of \$121 from Benjamin Watkins (1755-1831) for the Middle District Association and \$250 from John Bryce for the Richmond Female Mission Society. Following the action of the Convention the Board established missions at New Orleans, at St. Louis, in the Cherokee Nation and near Vincennes in "the Indiana Territory." These were to embrace the scattered settlements and the Indians in their vicinities.

James E. Welch, one of the appointees to St. Louis, on his way westward was detained in Orange County, Virginia, and in July, 1817, aided in the formation there of a local society, auxiliary to the Board. It subscribed that day \$235, "besides donations."²⁷

In September, 1817, the Shiloh Association "cordially invited" Rice to preach twice. The clerk reported that he had received copies of the Annual Report of the Board and was instructed to deliver one to each church. The Goshen "received the Minutes of the General Convention and the Report of the Board and had the additional pleasure of inviting to a seat Luther Rice, Agent of the Board." It asked him to preach. So did the Dover and a collection of \$272 followed his missionary sermon. The Association appointed a Missionary Board to receive annual contributions from the churches, donations from individuals and public collections, to send preachers to vacant churches and destitute places in its district. A surplus was to be given to "other Domestic or Foreign Missions." It appointed a day of Thanksgiving to God that he had "blessed the earth with abundant increase" and had "graciously smiled on Mis-

27. *The Latter Day Luminary* (a monthly, published by a committee of the Board), I, 33.

sionary and Bible Societies," and it prayed for his blessing "until the knowledge of the Lord covers the Earth."

In November Rice, on his way south, after a Saturday and Sunday "with a Mission Society in Fredericksburg," held a meeting and took a collection of \$5.87 at the home of Samuel Redd in Caroline County.

On a longer trip through Virginia beginning in January, 1818, in connection with preaching, Rice had opportunity to introduce the subject of missions and take collections in homes in Fincastle and Liberty (Bedford); in Lynchburg, where he "assisted to originate two mission societies and received contributions in the Presbyterian and Methodist meeting houses of more than \$200"; in the Presbyterian meeting houses in Lexington and Staunton; in the Methodist meeting house in Harrisonburg; at New Market, Luray and Millford; in the Methodist meeting-house in Front Royal; at Zion in Frederick County, where William Fristoe was pastor; in Winchester in the Lutheran meeting house and in Sedwick's Seminary, where a Female Mite Society was constituted; in the Presbyterian meeting house in Charles Town and at Harper's Ferry. In addition to collections for Domestic and Foreign Missions, he received designated gifts "for civilizing the Indians," for "an African Mission" and for the translation of the Scriptures into Burmese. He sold copies of the Annual Report of the Board and took subscriptions to the *Luminary* and for the support of the secretary of the Board, William Staughton (1770-1829), who edited the *Luminary* and was principal of the Theological Institute in Philadelphia. All these accounts Rice kept in detail and submitted to the Board.²⁸

Rice was again in Richmond in 1818. He reported that:

I had the opportunity of attending the annual meeting of the Female Mission Society, the African Mission Society, the Richmond Mission Society, of preaching a sermon for a collection to aid the beginning

28. *Luminary*, I, 122, 124, 141-2.

of a Youth's Mite Society, and of witnessing the zeal of the ladies to form an Education Society. It afforded me much pleasure, indeed, to observe the zeal and intelligence and capacity and success, discovered in the African Mission Society. The fact, too, that the little girls from 6 or 7, to 12 or 14 years old, had formed a society to save from the purchase of little delicacies their mites to assist the glorious object of giving the knowledge of the gospel to all the world, and that their lovely example was producing something similar among the little boys, could not fail to awaken emotions peculiarly delightful, anticipations the most lively and interesting.

In April Rice was in Norfolk and took collections of \$43.25 "in the two Baptist places of worship." In his report to the Board he is confident that "in Norfolk a Female Society will soon go into operation, probably has already," and he states that "in Alexandria has recently been originated a Female Missionary Society and one at Chappawamsic."

In April, 1818, the Board received \$40 from the "Auxiliary Society at Chappawamsic," \$100 from the "Female Board of Foreign Missions, Fredericksburg" and \$100 from the "Alexandria Female Missionary Mite Society" by Spencer H. Cone²⁹ (1785-1855). From the "Richmond Female Society to aid Foreign or Domestic Missions" came \$225 and \$250 from the "Richmond Baptist Foreign and Domestic Mission Society," both by the hand of John Bryce. In June, \$33.25 was received from the "Sedwick Seminary Female Mite Society" in Winchester.

The Portsmouth Association in June, 1818, invited Rice to a seat and paid into his hands \$25 for the expense and trouble of sending the Annual Report of the Board to the Association for distribution.

The Dover Association in October, 1818, received the Circular Letter from the Corresponding Secretary of the General Board "with much satisfaction." The Dover Missionary Board

29. Cone was pastor in Alexandria from 1816 to 1823, when he was called to New York City.

reported that it had engaged John Courtney, pastor of the church in Richmond, to travel once a month through the country between Richmond and Hampton, lying between the York and the James rivers, where the churches "were in a very destitute situation." In 1819, the Dover received a query: "How far may the Baptists consistently unite with professing Christians of other denominations in religious exercises?" The Association replied:

In most of the religious denominations amongst us, many of their religious exercises quite coincide with our own; to join such when convenient, seems not only not to be improper, but happily indicates a Christian temper in the present day of benevolence and godly enterprise. There are many excellent institutions set afloat by one denomination of Christians, in which all others can join with propriety, pleasure and great usefulness. To aid the advancement of such institutions is doubtless our bounden duty.

By action of the Goshen Association its Circular Letter in 1818 was written by A. M. Lewis and W. Y. Hiter on Gospel Missions. It emphasized that:

The providence of God, always working wonders, has called the attention of the American Baptists to the great work of missions, by throwing upon their patronage two excellent men devoted to the cause; one of them has already laid the foundation of a missionary establishment in the dark empire of Burmah, whilst the zeal and labours of the other, has kindled a missionary spirit throughout the United States. The work, thus providentially begun, appears to be encouraged and owned of the Lord. Believing, dear brethren, there are very few, if any, of you, disposed to doubt either the importance or propriety of gospel missions, we think it needless to address you with argument, but would rather point out to you how we may be useful in the sacred cause. None of us are exempt: there is work for us all.

In September, 1818, the Shiloh Association read and laid on the table a letter from Staughton with copies of the Annual Report of the Board, which it ordered "distributed to the messengers of such churches as chose to receive them." In 1819

Rice was present, made additional remarks on the Circular Letter from the Board and preached. In 1820 the address of the Board was read and a copy of the Minutes of the Association was sent to it.

In 1819 the Parkersburg Association resolved to correspond with the Board of Missions in Philadelphia and the Washington's Minutes recorded that "Luther Rice attended and delivered a missionary sermon and received some small contributions."

A Plan for the Improvement of Young Ministers

At the General Meeting of Correspondence at Lynchburg in June, 1818, Rice was present, bringing a letter from Staughton "proposing the raising a fund for assisting pious young ministers in their studies." The General Meeting resolved:

That we cordially approve of the plan of the Board of Foreign Missions for the education of young ministers and wish them unlimited success.

It appointed Semple, Absalom Waller and John Bryce to collect information and propose a plan to the next General Missionary Convention.

The Kettocton in August, 1818, referred to the next meeting of the Association the consideration of the theological institution recommended by the Triennial Convention. In 1819 it resolved unanimously that it regarded "the improvement of mind in the ministry as very desirable," but considered "the prerequisites for admission into the contemplated institution far too high." Rice was in attendance and was invited to preach a missionary sermon. The collection and the money already in hand "for missionary purposes" amounted to \$132.05½ and was placed in Rice's hands by Thomas Buck, Senior, treasurer of the Association. William Fristoe and Thornton Stringfellow were appointed messengers to the next

General Convention in 1820. In reply to a "query from Back-Lick respecting their obligation to support the Theological Institution," the Kettocton in 1820, "considered every church and individual at entire liberty to contribute or not contribute to that or any other institution."

In 1819 the Goshen Association "utterly disapproved of the establishment of a Theological School, as such, on any footing." But it set up a committee to report a plan for extending to young men, who gave evidence of being called to preach, aid in obtaining the advantages of education in schools convenient to them. The effort to provide an adequate Education Fund for this purpose was not successful and by action of the Association in 1828 the fund was returned to the churches which had contributed to it.

Rice was at the General Meeting of Correspondence in 1820 with a letter from Staughton, "which was received with thankfulness." The report of the committee on the education of young ministers, presented in 1819, was taken up. It was resolved that "as it is almost universally agreed among the Baptists of Virginia to take prudent steps for improving the gifts of young ministers, and as a plan has been adopted by the Missionary Convention, which it is thought will meet cordial approbation," that it "be referred to the next session so as to give a fair opportunity to our brethren to see the plan and make up their opinions."

The Dover Association instructed its delegates to the General Meeting of Correspondence in 1821 that they were "to have nothing to do with the theological school until instructed by this Association."

*Tract, Bible and Sunday School Societies,
"Fellow Workers"*

Along with the missionary awakening and the interest in the education of the ministry came other "benevolent institutions."

Early references to three of them are in the Circular Letter by Samuel Cornelius (1794-1870)³⁰ attached to the minutes of the meeting of the Portsmouth Association in 1819. He considered not as competitors, but as "fellow workers" in the cause of Christ, "Sunday School Societies, which are laboring successfully for the rescue of thousands from ignorance—from infamy—from perdition"; "Tract Societies, which are scattering through the world millions of silent messengers; Bible Societies, whose unabated endeavors in translating, printing and distributing the word of life have been crowned with signal success."

The Dover Association in October, 1819, agreed that David Roper (1792-1827)³¹ "write the next Circular Letter on the propriety and importance of Sunday Schools." It discussed "their great object, religious instruction," and their value "as free schools for elementary education" where children "are taught to read with propriety." "Where they have not been established many children have been kept in the greatest ignorance and become fit only for the lowest offices in society." It mentioned "a late report of the Baptist Sunday School Society of Richmond." That year a query came from Upper Essex: "Would it not be advisable for the Association to recommend a form for constituting Sunday School societies and for regulating and organizing Sunday Schools?" The answer a year later was:

Although we consider Sunday school institutions highly valuable, it appears to be rather out of the province of associations to furnish constitutions, or take any part in the regulating of them, or any other institutions not immediately connected with the association.

30. Cornelius was pastor in Norfolk, 1817-1824, and in Alexandria, 1824-1837.

31. Roper was superintendent of the first Sunday School in Richmond, organized "as early as 1816." The organization of the Second Church of Richmond of which Roper was the unpaid pastor from its beginning in 1820, is traceable to the opposition of John Courtney, pastor of the First Church, to teaching children on Sunday as a desecration of the Sabbath. (H. K. Ellyson, *Early Days*, 4.)

In 1820 ten churches, which had been dismissed at their request from the Kettocton Association,³² with the churches in Alexandria and Washington from the Baltimore Association, formed the Columbia Baptist Association. Thornton Stringfellow, who originated the movement for the organization and carried it through "contrary to the wishes of the older ministers," gave as his reason that the Kettocton with thirty-nine churches in eleven counties "was unwieldly, had no constitution, some of the ministers were contentious and the annual sessions were disturbed by vain janglings."³³ At its first meeting it appointed messengers to the General Meeting of Correspondence and Stringfellow as its correspondent with the Board in Philadelphia. Previously he had been correspondent with the Board for the Kettocton Association, which in 1820, "having no funds to send," did not think it expedient to appoint a successor.

Rice's Trips Through Virginia

Almost half of the twelve months immediately preceding the meeting of the General Convention in April, 1820, was spent by Rice travelling through Virginia in his two-wheeled sulky, over mountains and across rivers, by rough roads, deep in sand or mud. He preached and took collections for missions in fifty-five Virginia counties and thirteen towns, received gifts from 298 individuals for the purchase of a lot and erection of a building in Washington for the projected college, and stimulated the organization of education societies in Richmond and in Albemarle, Frederick and Powhatan counties.³⁴ For a week in August, 1819, he was accompanied by William Staughton, who preached on successive days in Orange, Madison,

32. They were Grove and Long Branch in Fauquier; Chappawamsic, Hartwood and Rock Hill in Stafford; Shiloh in Fredericksburg; Mt. Pleasant and Frying Pan in Fairfax; Little River in Loudoun and Nanjemoy in Maryland.

33. Shiloh Minutes, 1870, p. 18.

34. *Luminary*, II, 119.

Culpeper and Fauquier, at the meeting of the Kettocton Association in Frederick and in Alexandria.

On the fourth of these trips through Virginia, Rice drove on a December day in 1819 from Alexandria to attend the monthly concert of prayer for missions in Fredericksburg. The next day he stopped to see Andrew Broaddus at his home, "Auburn Hills," in Caroline, where he preached. He lodged that night at "Mordington," Semple's home in King and Queen, having driven 56 miles that day. The day following he visited William and Alexander Fleet, James Webb, John Clark and Samuel G. Fauntleroy and received their gifts for "the Lot," drove 25 miles to "Greenville," the home of George Dabney in King William, spent the night and went on to Richmond (29 miles) the next morning.

On his fifth trip Rice's headquarters were at "Dunlora," Mrs. Ann Hickman's residence in Powhatan, where Edward Baptist made his home. Here he was occupied in riding about with Baptist to obtain subscriptions for "the Lot" and in aiding the formation of the Baptist Education Society of Powhatan.³⁵

Until his death in 1836 Rice made many trips in Virginia, where he was held in esteem and affection and met liberal responses to his appeals for the support of missions and education. On one of these, while he was at "Cedar Vale" the home in Caroline of Samuel Redd, his daughter, Emily Redd (Mrs. E. H. Goulding), cut Rice's silhouette. This is the only existing original likeness of him.³⁶

The Convention of 1820

When the General Convention held its next triennial meeting in Philadelphia in 1820, a larger number of societies in Virginia than in any other state had sent to the Board each

35. Rice's Ms. Diary, 1819-20.

36. It is in the Virginia Baptist Historical Society.

year as much as one hundred dollars, and had appointed the two delegates to whom this sum entitled them. The Richmond Mission Society appointed Semple and John Bryce; the Richmond Female Mission Society, Samuel L. Straughn and David Roper; the Richmond African Mission Society, William Crane and John Eaton; the Richmond Education Society, David Donaldson and George Roper; the Jamestown (Prince Edward) Mission Society, Abner Watkins and Sterling Smith; the Charlotte County Mission Society, Richard Dabbs; the Union (Mecklenburg) Mission Society, Edward Baptist; the Norfolk Female Mission Society, James Mitchell and Samuel Cornelius; the Fredericksburg Female Mission Society, Absalom Waller and William James; the Goochland Female Mission Society, George Richardson and James Fife; the Winchester Education Society, George C. Sedwick and Edward G. Ship; the Albemarle Education Society, Daniel Davis and John Goss; the Powhatan Education Society, Benjamin Watkins and John Wooldridge; the Kettocton Association, William Fristoe and Thornton Stringfellow.³⁷ Of these twenty-seven delegates appointed, Semple, Baptist, Fife, Ship, Davis and Goss were recorded as in attendance. Semple was elected president and Baptist, one of the thirty managers. The Convention changed its name to "The General Convention of the Baptist Denomination in the United States for Foreign Missions and other important objects relating to the Redeemer's kingdom." This included Domestic Missions and "The Institution for educational purposes." It was popularly called "The Triennial Convention."

37. Other societies and their contributions listed in Rice's reports were the Female Education Society of Grubb Hill (Amelia), \$9.45; Roanoke Foreign Mission Society, \$253.20; Chappawamsic Foreign Mission Society, \$27; Union (Culpeper) Missionary Society, \$100; Mt. Airy Cent Society, \$30; Richmond Juvenile Mission Society, \$5; Lunenburg and Nottoway Mission Society, \$100; Lynchburg Mission Society, \$45; Lynchburg Female Mission Society, \$10.

Cary, Teague and Company to Africa

In 1819 the corresponding secretary to the Board of the Convention received from Obadiah B. Brown (1779-1852),³⁸ an extract of a letter he had received from William Crane of Richmond:

Richmond, March 28, 1819.

You will probably recollect, that I introduced you to two of our coloured brethren in this place, who are accustomed to speak in public; one named Collin Teague, the other Lott Cary. Ever since the missionary subject has been so much agitated in this country, these two brethren, associated with many others, have been wishing they could, in some way, aid their unhappy kindred in Africa; and I suppose you have heard of their having formed a missionary society for this sole purpose. Some letters published in No. VI. of the Luminary have served to awaken them effectually. They are now determined to go themselves to Africa; and the only questions with them are, in what way it will be best for them to proceed, and what steps are prerequisite to be taken. They think it necessary to spend some time in study first. They both possess industry and abilities, such as, with the blessing of Providence, would soon make them rich. It is but two or three years since either of them enjoyed their freedom; and both have paid large sums for their families. They now possess little, except a zealous wish to go and do what they can. Brother Lott has a wife and several little children. He has a place a little below Richmond, that cost him \$1500, but will probably not sell for more than \$1000 at this time. Brother Collin has a wife, a son 14 years of age and a daughter of 11, for whom he has paid \$1300, and has scarcely anything left. Both of their wives are Baptists; their children, amiable and docile, have been to school considerably; and I hope, if they go, will likewise be of service. Collin is a saddler and harness maker. He had no early education. The little that he has gained, has been by chance and piece-meal. He has judgment, and as much keenness of penetration as almost any man. He can read, though he is not a good reader, and can write so as to make out a letter. The little knowledge he has of figures, has been gained by common calculation in business. Lott was brought up on a farm; and

38. Brown was pastor of the First Baptist Church of Washington, D. C., member of the Board of Managers of the African Colonization Society and of the Board of the Baptist General Convention.

for a number of years has been chief manager among the laborers in the largest tobacco warehouse in this city. He has charge of receiving, marking and shipping tobacco; and the circumstance that he receives \$700 a-year wages may help you to form an estimate of the man. He reads better than Collin, and is, in every respect, a better scholar.

They have been trying to preach about ten or eleven years, and are both about forty years old. . . . Their object is to carry the tidings of salvation to the benighted Africans. They wish to be where their color will be no disparagement to their usefulness. I suppose the funds of our African Mission Society here, after their next meeting, will probably amount to six hundred dollars, which I believe the society will be willing to appropriate to the aid of their brethren, should they go.³⁹

At the meeting in April the Board accepted them, recommended that while waiting for transportation they "improve their minds to the uttermost" and offered pecuniary aid if necessary. Transportation did not come until January, 1821, when they sailed from Norfolk in the company of colonists sent to Liberia by the American Colonization Society, with which the Board thought they should be connected. They had devoted the previous year to preparation for their mission and were publicly ordained in the First Baptist Church of Richmond—the first to go from Virginia to a foreign land as heralds of the Gospel. A church composed of Cary and his wife; Collin Teague, with his wife and his son, Hillary Teague; and Joseph Langford and his wife, who accompanied them, was organized before they left Richmond. Cary preached a farewell sermon in the First Baptist Church to a large congregation.

Collin and Hillary Teague with Lott Cary and John Lewis had been attending the evening school for young colored men conducted by William Crane. Hillary Teague became pastor in Monrovia, editor of the *Liberia Herald* and secretary of the Colony.⁴⁰ Cary, after great usefulness both as a missionary and as vice-agent of the government, was killed by an explosion of

39. *Luminary*, I, 401.

40. Adams, *William Crane*, 12.

gun-powder in 1828, while fortifying the colony against a threatened attack by the natives.⁴¹

At its meeting in May, 1820 the Board received requests from the Petersburg African Baptist Mission Society and from Colston M. Waring, "a preacher of colour at Petersburg,"⁴² to send him as a missionary to Africa. The Board resolved to encourage Waring as its missionary, provided the expenses of his outfit be met by him or his brethren in that quarter.⁴³

The Convention of 1823

Delegates to the General Convention, meeting in Washington in 1823, were Semple and David Roper from the Richmond Baptist Foreign and Domestic Mission Society, William Crane from the Richmond African Missionary Society, Henry Keeling (1794-1870) from the Richmond Baptist Education Society, John Bryce from the Fredericksburg Female Baptist Missionary Society, Samuel Cornelius from the Norfolk Female Baptist Missionary Society, Benjamin Dawson and John L. Dagg from the Upperville Baptist Society, auxiliary to the Convention, and Spencer H. Cone from the Alexandria Female Baptist Missionary Society. Semple was re-elected president, as he was in 1826 and 1829. Bryce, Cone, Cornelius, Dagg and Keeling were put on the Board of Managers. In his report to the Board for the preceding year, besides the contributions that he received for missionary purposes and for the education of young ministers, Rice listed 780 individual subscriptions from Virginia for the payment on the site and the building of Columbian College or the endowment of a professorship.⁴⁴

41. J. B. Taylor, *Lott Cary*, 93.

42. Waring was a delegate from Gillfield to the Portsmouth Association in 1817-1823.

43. The *Evangelical Inquirer*, 1826, p. 27. stated that at the station of the Colonization Society at Cape Messurado were "Rev. Lott Cary and Rev. C. M. Waring, preachers. The latter is not under the particular direction of the Board." "The Church at Monrovia contains two ordained ministers, Messrs. John Lewis and Colston M. Waring." (Proceedings of the General Convention, 1829, p. 15.)

44. *Luminary*, IV, 171, 204-12. The same name may occur several times if the same person gave to more than one object.

The General Association

OTHER ORGANIZATIONS, PUBLICATIONS

1821 - 1836

WHILE the General Meeting of Correspondence continued its annual sessions, its constitution gave it almost nothing to do. Only a few of the twenty district associations in Virginia belonged to it and its meetings were thinly attended. When it was due to meet in Charlottesville in June, 1821, only Thornton Stringfellow from the Columbia, James Fife from the Goshen and Edward Baptist from the Appomattox appeared. No officer was present and no business was done. Two days were spent in preaching. When the three delegates departed Baptist and Fife rode together as far as Fife's home in Goochland. Baptist suggested a new organization for the definite purpose of inquiring into the spiritual destitution in Virginia and devising means of relieving it. Fife approved and when he consulted William Crane and John Bryce they "gave a cordial reception."¹

The Appomattox, Columbia, Dover, Meherrin and Portsmouth associations were represented at the General Meeting of Correspondence held in the First Church of Richmond in June 1822. Besides the accredited messengers there were present as visitors, James Fife from the Goshen, Robert Tisdale² from the Greenbrier, and Luther Rice, who brought a letter

1. Address of James Fife in minutes of the General Association, 1873, p. 22. Edward Baptist's Ms. *Diary*.

2. "Robert Tisdale, a minister from the lower part of the State who had spent two or three years among the mountains to regain his health." (Jeter, *Recollections*, 107.)

from the Board of Managers of the General Convention. The business transacted was the approval of a constitution for the new organization, drafted by Edward Baptist, which it recommended to the district associations. It read:

Article 1. This meeting shall be called the General Association of Baptists in Virginia, for the supply of vacant churches, and for the spread of the Gospel throughout the State.

Article 2. It shall be the entire object of this General Association to propagate the Gospel and advance the Redeemer's Kingdom throughout the State, by supplying vacant churches with the preached word, and by sending preachers into destitute regions within the limits of the State.

Article 3. This General Association shall be composed of representatives from the several Associations in the State, who may choose to unite, each Association being entitled to four representatives.

Article 4. These representatives, when convened, shall in no case interfere with the internal regulations of the churches or Associations, nor shall they pursue any other object than that specified in the second article.

Article 5. As the object of the General Association is the supply of ministerial labors in destitute places in the State, and funds being indispensable to the accomplishment of that object, such funds may be raised by voluntary contributions from each constituent association, procured in the way they may think best, and by such other means as the General Association may deem proper, not infringing the rights of individuals or churches. No sum is necessary in order to representation from the respective associations.

Article 6. This General Association may appoint an executive board, to transact all business during the recess.

Article 7. This constitution shall be subject to revision and amendment on a vote of two thirds of the representatives present in the General Association.³

“Considering the great jealousy against combinations the name ‘Association’ was adopted as more familiar than ‘Convention’.”⁴ David Roper and John Bryce were appointed to draft an address “explaining the nature and design” of the new

3. Minutes of General Meeting of Correspondence, 1822, p. 6.

4. Fife in Minutes of General Association, 1873, p. 23.

constitution and messengers were appointed to visit eleven of the associations not represented and to present it. Tisdale was asked to attend all the associations west of the Blue Ridge that he could.

The first meeting of the General Association was appointed for Saturday, June 7, 1823, at the Second Baptist Church in Richmond. Except the Portsmouth the five associations represented at the General Meeting of Correspondence the year before sent messengers, as did the Albemarle, Goshen and Greenbrier. Of the twenty-one appointed messengers fifteen attended. Eleven "ministering brethren" present were invited to seats. Bryant W. Lester from the Meherrin was the only layman listed in the group. Semple, who had been moderator and treasurer of the Meeting of Correspondence, and William Todd, its clerk, filled the same offices in the new organization.

The Association received invitations from the two Presbyterian, the two Methodist and the two Baptist churches in Richmond, and the church in Manchester, to occupy their pulpits on Sunday morning, afternoon and night, and appointed Eli Ball, Edward Baptist, O. B. Brown, John Bryce, James Fife, A. M. Lewis, Luther Rice, R. B. Semple and William Todd to do so. On Monday a board of managers was appointed. Its twenty-one members, five of whom constituted a quorum, were R. B. Semple and William Todd, both of King and Queen, David Roper of Richmond, Philip Montague of Essex, Andrew Broaddus of Caroline, John Jenkins of Cumberland, Edward Baptist of Powhatan, Samuel Davidson of Campbell, John S. Lee of Lynchburg, William Leftwich of Bedford, James Ellison of Monroe, Valentine M. Mason of Lexington, John Goss of Albemarle, Addison M. Lewis of Spotsylvania, James Fife of Goochland, John Bryce of Alexandria, John L. Dagg of Loudoun and Samuel Cornelius of Norfolk. The laymen were William Fleet and James Webb of King and Queen and B. W. Lester of Charlotte.

The treasurer reported \$204.11¼ in hand from the fund bequeathed by the Meeting of Correspondence, collections and gifts. This included \$132.50 by the hand of James Fife from the Female Baptist Missionary Societies of Goochland and Fluvanna and the Louisa Mission and Bible Society. The total was increased by \$29.24, taken up after the adjournment of the Association. Visitors to nine of the associations not represented were appointed.

The Board met in August, 1823, at the home of Andrew Broaddus in Caroline. By invitation Jeremiah B. Jeter (1802-80) and Daniel Witt (1801-71) were present. These two "Bedford Plowboys," each within a few months of twenty years of age, had begun to preach together in their native section and had extended their activities from Bedford into the adjoining counties, Franklin, Henry, Pittsylvania, Campbell, Amherst and Botetourt. Everywhere they had been received by large congregations with deep interest as the revival spread gradually but steadily. They had accompanied Tisdale to the meeting of the General Association in Richmond in 1823, where they preached and where they heard and met many of the Baptist leaders.⁵

The Board, before beginning its work of evangelizing the State, desired to know more of its religious condition and engaged Jeter and Witt to explore the fields of greatest spiritual destitution. They were to make a month's tour of western Virginia and another month in the parts of the Portsmouth and Meherrin that were most needy. Each was to receive \$30.00 a month.⁶

In October, 1823, the young missionary evangelists set out from Bedford on horseback, equipped after the style common to the section, with well stuffed saddlebags, and overcoats and umbrellas strapped behind them. They passed through Franklin

5. Jeter, *Recollections*, 63, 107-10.

6. General Association Minutes, 1824, p. 8.

and Patrick on their way to the meeting of the New River Association in Grayson County. It "was a small body. Its ministers were plain and illiterate, of narrow views and strong prejudices. The antission spirit was just beginning to develop" and the visitors "were looked upon with suspicion as spies sent to search out the resources of the country." From Giles they made a hasty circuit through Wythe, Monroe, Greenbrier, Pocahontas, Bath, Alleghany and Botetourt. Tisdale accompanied them from the Association to Pocahontas and was of great help in securing introductions and information. They "found generally great destitution of religious instruction." Methodist circuit riders had penetrated most neighborhoods but their labours were desultory. There were Presbyterians at Lewisburg and a few other points. Baptist churches were few, feeble and widely scattered, supplied with occasional preaching by illiterate pastors, with whom, for the most part, the ministry was a secondary matter. Their reception by the people was cordial. In almost every neighborhood they were invited to establish mission stations. Court houses, school houses and private houses were offered for occasional or constant use.⁷

In December they traversed Campbell, Prince Edward, Lunenburg, Brunswick, Dinwiddie, Sussex, Southampton, Isle of Wight, James City, York, Gloucester, Matthews and Middlesex. The conditions met on this trip differed widely from those in the West. While there were many destitute places there was a continuous line of meeting houses in which to preach every day.⁸

They ended their journey at the meeting of the Board of Managers in January, 1824, at the home⁹ of Philip Gatewood near Upper King and Queen Meeting House, where they made written reports of their findings. The Board engaged Jeter to return for four months to Sussex and adjacent parts. It sent

7. Jeter, *Recollections*, 113-115.

8. Jeter, *Witt*, 77-8.

9. "Traveler's Rest."

Witt to Semple's home for a few months of literary and theological study and afterwards for five weeks preaching in and around Williamsburg. Then with James Leftwich, a young licensed preacher chosen as a colleague, Witt revisited part of Western Virginia that he and Jeter had explored.¹⁰

The second meeting of the General Association was held in Lynchburg in "Mr. Dillard's school room" in June, 1824. Only one more district association, Roanoke, had affiliated and its delegates did not appear. Of the thirty messengers appointed, sixteen were present, together with twenty "ministering brethren." The Female Missionary Societies of Goochland, of Fluvanna, at South Anna Meeting House and in Lynchburg, and the Union Missionary Societies of Bedford and Mecklenburg sent letters and contributions. Total gifts amounted to \$484.06½

The great jealousy in the district associations and among Baptists generally of any body that was supposed to be able to encroach on the liberties and prerogatives of the churches had handicapped the earlier efforts for unity of action through the General Committee and the General Meeting of Correspondence. From experience with these prejudices the constitution proposed by the General Meeting of Correspondence had limited "the entire object of this General Association to propagate the Gospel and advance the Redeemer's Kingdom throughout the State," nor should it "pursue any other object."¹¹ Its funds should be raised by voluntary contributions "not infringing the rights of individuals or churches." To meet the fear of any change this meeting amended Article 7 of the suggested constitution so that future amendments, after approval by two-thirds of the members present at any meeting, should be sent for the considering of the associations and missionary societies constituting the General Association and the approval of the majority should be requisite to ratification.

10. Jeter, *Witt*, 85, 88, 115.

11. Jeter, *Recollections*, 108.

To encourage the formation of local auxiliary societies by individuals in associations that did not cooperate they were given one representative for each \$25 or two representatives for \$50 or more contributed.

The address to the associations, prepared by Semple, emphasized:

The union amongst brethren is of first and last importance. In associations [it] tends to preserve uniformity of churches with each other. Associations of a whole state or of the United States tend to preserve us one great and undivided people. . . . This has been a primary object in keeping up our General Association. . . . We have been also actively employed in devising ways and means to extend the benefits of the blessed Gospel to our fellow-mortals and countrymen who are destitute of this blessing.

The Board, meeting immediately after the General Association adjourned, engaged Jeter to return to Suffolk, and Witt and Leftwich to continue their labors in Alleghany, Bath, Pocahontas and "the Calf Pastures in Rockbridge and Augusta." Robert Tisdale was appointed a missionary to "the tract of country called Teaze's Valley and then the counties of Giles, Montgomery, Wythe and Botetourt." John S. Lee was appointed to work in Greenbrier, Nicholas and Monroe; and Jacob Creath, Junior, "to occupy for six weeks the country between Richmond and Hampton" and afterwards the counties of Nottoway, Dinwiddie and Brunswick for six weeks more. (Lee and Creath did not undertake to carry out their appointments.) They were to be paid \$25 a month. The funds of the Board limited all engagements to periods of not more than four months.¹²

Although four members of the Board, including the officers, were residents of King and Queen County a quorum failed to attend its December meeting at Lee Boulware's home,¹³ but

12. General Association Minutes, 1824, p. 13.

13. In Newtown.

was present in January at Capt. William Fleet's¹⁴ and in April at Josiah Ryland's¹⁵—all in that county, a center of Baptist interest and influence.¹⁶

The meeting of the Association in June, 1825, was in Richmond. The Portsmouth and the Strawberry sent messengers and the Union Association sent a letter. The eleven associations and four missionary societies represented had appointed thirty-four delegates. Twenty-four attended. Ten ministers and six other brethren were invited to seats. Contributions of \$972.03½ were reported. With the purpose of insuring that a quorum would be present at its semi-annual meeting eight of the new Board's thirty members were from King and Queen County. Seven missionaries were appointed.

At the meeting in Fredericksburg in 1826 the Shiloh had representatives and the Washington Association sent a letter stating its "cordial approbation . . . and willingness to unite." Of the thirty-six messengers appointed by thirteen associations and four missionary societies, twenty-five were present. Contributions for the year had fallen to \$606.26½. Semple declined re-election as moderator. John Bryce was elected and Abner W. Clopton (1784-1833) was reappointed clerk.

For the next three years (1827-8-9) at the meetings in Cartersville, Richmond and Petersburg never more than eight associations sent representatives. The number appointed dropped in 1829 to twenty-two and those present to sixteen with seven visitors. Only two societies, South Anna in the Goshen and Deep Run-Chickahominy in the Dover, were represented. Collections reached a low of \$382.91. V. M. Mason (1783-1843), Fife, Jeter and Baptist were appointed to recommend a change in the constitution of the body that would bring broader interest and support. They recommended that member-

14. "Goshen."

15. "Farmington."

16. General Association Minutes, 1825, p. 9.

ship by associations, regardless of contributions, be discontinued and that Article 3 read:

Any person contributing ten dollars annually to the funds of this Association shall be a member and shall have the privilege of appointing a representative to this body; and any person contributing thirty dollars or upwards shall be a member of this body for life with the privilege of appointing a representative as above. And every Association, Church or Missionary Society contributing ten dollars shall be entitled to one representative and another for every additional ten dollars.

But no person shall be entitled to a seat in this Association who is not a Baptist in good standing. Provided, however, that any person or Missionary Society not of the Baptist Church or order, but contributing as above stated for the benefit of this Association may have the privilege of appointing a representative of the above description.

Almost all of the delegates present and the affiliated district associations and societies, to which it was referred, approved it as the most equitable principle of representation, since it gave those that contributed the funds the right to disburse them. The result was that at the meeting in Richmond the next year "the number in attendance not only increased but all who came were interested, for it was the money they and their churches had contributed which they were required to distribute."¹⁷ There were fifty-eight present, representing fifteen missionary societies, eight churches, six individuals, four associations (Albemarle, Dover, Portsmouth and Strawberry) and three groups. Ten other ministers were invited to seats. Collections amounted to \$1,003.22. Semple was elected moderator, in succession to John Kerr who had served the last three years. William Todd and James B. Taylor (1804-71) were chosen clerk and assistant. The treasurer, William Crane, reported that, by the payment of \$30 by themselves or their churches, William Harris, James Leftwich, William Leftwich, Robert Ryland, James C. Jordan and Mrs. Camilla A. Harrison (of

17. *Virginia Baptist Ministers*, II, 493.

Charles City County) had become life members. The Association resolved that at each annual meeting, time be set apart for the 'general interests of religion and morality, especially in relation to Bible, Sabbath School, Mission, Tract and Temperance Societies.'

In 1829, for greater convenience in attendance, the meetings of the Board were located in Richmond and its membership was made up of Henry Keeling, John Kerr, James B. Taylor, Eli Ball, Richard C. Wortham, William Crane, Archibald Thomas, George Roper, Thomas H. Fox, George R. Myers, James Sizer, Simon Frayser, Madison Walthall, Richard Reins and Charles H. Hyde — all of the city of Richmond; James Webb and William Todd of King and Queen; Bryant W. Lester and Abner W. Clopton of Charlotte; Jeremiah B. Jeter of Lancaster; Peter Ainslie of Gloucester; James Fife of Goochland; Poindexter P. Smith of Buckingham; James Leftwich and Jesse Witt of Bedford; John H. Steger of Amelia; Edward Baptist of Powhatan; Robert Tisdale of Harrison; James O. Alderson and Edward Rion of Greenbrier; John Ogilvie of Fauquier; William F. Broadus (1801-76), James Garnett and Cumberland George of Culpeper; George Love and Joseph Baker of Loudoun; R. B. C. Howell and Jeremiah Hendren of Norfolk; Samuel Cornelius of Alexandria; Valentine M. Mason of Lexington; Robert T. Daniel of Southampton; John Goss, Charles Wingfield and Nimrod Branham of Albemarle; Martin Eaton and Gilbert Mason of Petersburg; Robert Ryland of Lynchburg; John Billingsly of Spotsylvania; John Goodall of Hampton; William McDermott of Botetourt; Scervant Jones of Williamsburg; John Dangerfield of Matthews; Philip Montague of Essex; James Clopton of New Kent; John Micou and Spilsbe Woolfolk of Caroline; Luther Rice and R. B. Temple of Washington; Humphrey Brooke and James H. Leigh.

In its report the Board attributed the lack of the success expected from the work of its missionaries to the distances from

their homes to their fields and to the facts that the territory assigned them was so extensive and their stay in any locality was so short that few deep impressions could be made and that the period of months or weeks of their employment was too brief. It recommended that missionaries live on their fields of labor and their employment be from year to year.

The Baptist Convention of Virginia

Since 1813 there had been a number of local missionary societies in Virginia which had sent delegates to the Triennial Convention and contributions to its Board. But there had been no auxiliary State organization until a meeting was held in Richmond in the home of David Roper on Saturday, December 24, 1824. Semple was called to the chair, Luther Rice explained the proposed object and William Staughton, president of the Columbian College in Washington, headed the committee to take the subject under consideration. On Sunday, sermons in the Baptist meeting houses by Staughton and J. L. Dagg "were heard with profound interest and admiration by the crowds that attended."¹⁸ The meeting on Monday adopted the name, "The Baptist Convention of Virginia." Its constitution stated that its design "is to aid the objects of the General Convention of the Baptist Denomination in the United States and any missionary objects that may be deemed expedient." An address to the churches described the relation of the State Convention to the local societies and to the General Convention as "similar to that borne by streams to the springs that produced them and to the Ocean into which they flow." it said:

We rejoice at the existence, and shall still more rejoice at the prosperity of the General Association. From assistance in support of its object, i. e., the supplying of destitute places in our own Commonwealth, we hope never to withdraw one cent. Its toils are perfectly coincident with our own. Indeed we wish to be considered as two labourers, in different quarters of the same spacious field.

18. *Jeter, Recollections*, XXVI.

The officers elected were R. B. Semple, president; Henry Keeling, vice-president; David Roper, corresponding secretary; George Roper, recording secretary; Anthony R. Thornton, treasurer. Other managers were William Crane, J. L. Dagg, J. B. Jeter, Peter Nelson, Luther Rice, J. B. Valentine, Madison Walthall and George Woodfin. With the exception of the treasurer, the officers and half of the other managers were the same persons selected by the Richmond Baptist Foreign and Domestic Mission Society (organized in 1813) at its meeting in 1825.

This duplication of organizations was eliminated when the Richmond Society in 1826 changed its name to "The Baptist Mission Society of Virginia,"¹⁹ and absorbed the Baptist Convention of Virginia. It engaged Eli Ball (1786-1853) who had come from New England in 1823 to the pastorate of Deep Run in the Dover, as its agent for part of his time to collect funds and form auxiliary societies. In addition to the \$200 sent to the treasurer of the General Convention \$90 was appropriated for Philip Montague's and John Micou's services as missionaries to Maryland.

The Tract Society

In 1824 at the suggestion of Noah Davis (1802-30), pastor of Cumberland Street in Norfolk, The Baptist General Tract Society was organized in Washington. O. B. Brown was president; John Bryce, vice-president; Luther Rice, treasurer; and William Staughton, chairman of the Directors. After the initial subscription in Washington of \$23 the first gifts received were \$40 from the Norfolk Auxiliary Society and \$10 from the Richmond Auxiliary. A few months later there was a "depository," from which tracts could be obtained, in each of these cities and auxiliary societies in Sussex, Alexandria, Jeffersonton and

19. *Evangelical Inquirer*, 147.

South Quay.²⁰ When its headquarters were moved to Philadelphia in 1826 Davis became its manager and continued until his early death.²¹ Abner W. Clopton, pastor of Ash Camp and Mossingford churches in Charlotte County was for several years agent for the Society and formed a number of auxiliaries in the surrounding country.²²

The Society for the Promotion of Temperance

The Virginia Society for the Promotion of Temperance was conceived in the spring of 1826 by Abner W. Clopton and discussed with fellow delegates as they returned from the meeting of the General Association in June.²³ The Society was organized at the Ash Camp Meeting House in October. Clopton had given ample notice and a large and excited congregation was present.²⁴ Eli Ball preached "an appropriate sermon." A constitution previously prepared by Clopton was adopted. Article No. 3 read:

Any sober person, whether a member of a church or not, who will consent to abstain from the habitual use of spirituous liquor, and use it as a medicine only, and, provided he be the head of a family, shall enforce the same rule upon his children and domestics, may become a member of this Society.

Note.—In requiring a member who is the head of a family to enforce upon the members of his family, the rule observed by himself in abstaining from the use of spirituous liquors, it is expected that he

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20. The Richmond Baptist Foreign and Domestic Mission Society in 1825 recommended the formation of auxiliaries to the General Tract Society, "wherever practicable, and that churches constitute thier pastors life members by the payment of \$10." In 1827 a "Juvenile Tract Society" in Richmond had seventy members, paying one cent a week and receiving tracts as issued. (*Evangelical Inquirer*, 261.)
21. The Baptist General Tract Society became the "American Baptist Publication and Sunday School Society" in 1840. (Brown, *History of the American Baptist Publication Society*, 117.)
22. Jeter, *Clopton*, 109. "More than one hundred throughout Virginia." (*Virginia Baptist Ministers*, II, 394.)
23. The American Temperance Society was organized in Boston in February, 1826, but its existence was unknown to Clopton (Jeter, *Clopton*, 173).
24. Jeter, *Recollections*, 35.

will use for this end, such means as he may deem rational and expedient; and if by the use of such means, he find it impracticable to enforce the rule, he is not bound by the spirit of this article, nor chargeable with a violation of it. Nor is there any thing in this Article or in the Constitution which prohibits a member from the exercise of the common civilities due to his friends and neighbours.²⁵

Resolutions for putting the principal aim of the Society into practical effect and an address to the public on the need for its formation, also drawn by Clopton, were accepted after full discussion and slight alteration.

After earnest appeals to persons to join it only nine pledged adherence to the new organization. Eight of these were ministers, most of them from a distance.²⁶ They were ridiculed and pitied as misguided enthusiasts, but by its first annual meeting, held in September, 1827, at Deep Run Meeting House in Henrico County where Ball was pastor, the parent society reported eighty-four members. They included twenty-three Baptist ministers, one Presbyterian and one Episcopal minister and forty-five heads of families. There was an auxiliary society at Upper King and Queen with 107 members; one at Deep Run, another at North Anna and a North Anna Juvenile Temperance Society. A Northern Neck Society had been organized at the Kilmarnock Meeting House in Lancaster County.²⁷

While Article 2 of its constitution prescribed that the Society have no connection with any church or association it spread most widely in Baptist communities. Its auxiliaries met in the Baptist meeting houses and were encouraged by their pastors

25. *Wisdom's Voice*, 146.

26. *Wisdom's Voice*, 156. Jeter, *Clopton*, 177. Jeter, *Recollections*, 35. The officers elected were "Rev. Eli Ball, Chairman; B. W. Lester, Esq., Clerk; Rev. E. Collins, Treasurer; Rev. A. W. Clopton, Corresponding Secretary." (*Evangelical Inquirer*, 127.)

27. *Wisdom's Voice*, 156. The Upper King and Queen Society had been organized in June 1827, with "between forty and fifty members—a large number, females." Its officers were "Rev. William Hill, Chairman; Mr. Robt. B. Lyne, Recording Secretary; Mr. William M. Waring, Corresponding Secretary; Mr. Baldwin L. L. Matthews, Treasurer." (*Evangelical Inquirer*, 378.)

under Clopton's leadership, although he avoided and publicly disclaimed making it a "test question" of membership in churches and associations.²⁸

The Ministers' Meeting

A group of ministers in adjacent counties organized in 1829 "The Virginia Baptist Ministers' Meeting." Its members were Eli Ball and Meriwether L. Jones, pastors in Henrico; Edward Baptist and Samuel Dorsett in Powhatan; William Hatchett in King William; Henry Keeling, John Kerr and James B. Taylor in Richmond; James Price and Matthew W. Webber in Goochland; William W. Snow in Dinwiddie; Gilbert Mason in Petersburg and John Faulcon in Surry. It met in the First Baptist Meeting House in Richmond in August and quarterly thereafter — at Perkins in Goochland, at Peterville and in the home of Baptist in Powhatan, and at Dover and in the home of Webber in Goochland. After the introductory sermon before a large and attentive congregation the members convened at a neighboring pastor's home to hear and discuss essays and exegeses on topics and passages of Scripture that had been assigned for papers. At the fourth session, in April, 1830, it resolved that its name was too general for the limits to which it was confined and changed it to "The Baptist Ministers' Meeting of Richmond and Vicinity."²⁹

Other District Associations Formed

In 1825 the Strawberry dismissed thirteen churches in Henry, Patrick and Franklin counties to form the Pig River Association. Joseph Pedigo (Perego), who had been moderator of the Strawberry since 1799, was elected moderator of the Pig River from its beginning until his death in 1837.

28. Appomattox Association Minutes, 1833, p. 9.

29. Ms. Minutes of the "Ministers' Meeting." There is no other record.

The Kettocton Association in 1827 dismissed six churches in Hampshire County, which formed the Patterson's Creek Association.

On application to the Shiloh in 1828 the ten churches west of the Blue Ridge were permitted to withdraw and form the Ebenezer Association.³⁰

Periodicals

In 1822 John Jenkins³¹ published in Danville, Virginia, *The Roanoke Religious Correspondent or Monthly Evangelical Visitant*, a sixteen page magazine of which he was editor. It contained articles and information of general and particularly, of Baptist interest. After May, 1823, it was published in Milton, North Carolina. Patronage did not warrant its continuance after the second year.

At its meeting in 1825 the Dover Association resolved:

That this Association cordially recommends to the patronage of the churches and the friends of religion in general, the religious periodical publication about to be established in Richmond by brother David Roper, under the title of the *Richmond Christian Journal*.

Roper's decline in health that year and death in 1827 prevented the consummation of his purpose.

In October, 1826, the first number of the *Evangelical Inquirer*, a monthly of thirty-two pages, came from the press of Thomas M. White in Richmond. Its editor and publisher was Henry Keeling. In his "Introduction" and "To the Readers" he stated:

That as the Latter Day Luminary does not continue to shine from Washington³² something of the kind is required, adapted to Virginia

30. They were Big Spring, Hawksbill, Mill Creek, Smith's Creek, Mt. Carmel and Union in Shenandoah; Brock's Gap and Salem in Rockingham; Lost River in Hardy and South Branch in Pendleton.

31. John Jenkins was pastor of Lower Banister (Riceville) in Pittsylvania County, from its origin in 1798 until his death in 1828. He was clerk of the Roanoke Association, 1797-1827.

32. The *Luminary* was discontinued after 1825.

and North Carolina, to relieve entire dependence on our northern brethren for literary and religious periodical publications. . . . It may be expected to contain Essays, original and selected, on Evangelical Doctrine, Experience and Practice; exhibitions of the progress made in the march of Messiah's Kingdom in Christendom and among the Heathen; critical and explanatory remarks on difficult and obscure portions of the Sacred Scriptures; censures directed against crimes which are most prevalent in the age in which we live; together with biographical, literary and even political sketches.

Its success prompted the announcement in the twelfth number of its change from a monthly to a "weekly royal sheet."

The first issue, a four page sheet, appeared on January 11, 1828. To avoid confusion with the secular *Richmond Enquirer* the name was changed to *Religious Herald*. The publisher, William Sands (1793-1868), had come from England in 1818. He was an experienced printer and had been brought to Richmond from Baltimore by William Crane, the paper's financial backer.³³ The subscription price was \$3. Henry Keeling was associated with Sands as editor from 1828 to 1830 and Eli Ball from 1831 to 1833. Sands was sole editor as well as publisher from 1834 to 1856.

John A. Broadus described him when he saw him in 1845 as "a queer-looking and charming little old man, with his quaint English accent, his benevolent look, his acquaintance with everybody and knowledge of everything that pertained to Virginia Baptists."³⁴

J. B. Jeter wrote of Sands that:

He was remarkable, not for the brilliancy of his thoughts or the elegance of his style, but for the soundness of his judgment, the wisdom of his counsel, the conservatism of his views and the kindness of his spirit. Others might sow the seeds of discord; his aim was to heal dissension and promote brotherly love. He was sound and earnest, but not a bigoted and intolerant Baptist. He duly appreciated piety

33. Cathcart, *Baptist Encyclopaedia*, 1310 J.

34. *Religious Herald*, October 23, 1890.

and good works in all communions. His head was an encyclopaedia. Facts, dates, members, were at his tongue's end, and his memory was rarely at fault. In all our denominational enterprises he felt a lively interest and took an active part in Sunday schools, missions, education, temperance. Every good cause found in him an earnest and consistent advocate.³⁵

The Dover and Virginia Selections

In response to a resolution of the Dover Association in 1827 there was published the next year *The Dover Selection of Spiritual Songs*, by Andrew Broaddus. This was widely used within and without Virginia and was followed in 1829 by a second edition. In 1836 it was succeeded by *The Virginia Selection of Psalms, Hymns and Spiritual Songs*, by Andrew Broaddus. A "New Edition, Enlarged and Improved" was published in Richmond and Philadelphia in 1840, and republished in Richmond in 1856 and in Philadelphia in 1870 and 1876.

35. *Religious Herald*, September 10, 1868.

Educational Enterprises

1821 - 1835

FOR a number of years the interest of Virginia Baptists in education was centered around Luther Rice's plan for a Baptist college in the Nation's capital. This was realized when Columbian College was incorporated by act of Congress in 1821. Robert B. Semple was elected to the Board of Trustees from Virginia.¹ The faculty and students of the Theological Institute in Philadelphia were moved to Washington as the Theological Department of the College. The Classical Department was opened in January, 1822, with a faculty of seven, headed by William Staughton. It began with a student body of twenty, which by April, 1822 numbered fifty-nine.² The catalogue for 1825 listed a faculty of ten and 113 students in the Preparatory and Classical Departments. These came from the District of Columbia and twenty states. Virginia sent twenty-three, four times as many as any other state. John Withers, a Baptist layman in Alexandria, was the largest financial contributor.³

When the College was compelled by financial troubles to close its doors temporarily in 1827 Semple was appointed president of the Board and general agent in an effort to raise \$50,000 for its relief. Virginia supported him generously. Other Virginians, Eli Ball and Abner W. Clopton, were agents for South Carolina and Georgia. After Semple's death in 1831 Clopton

1. *Luminary*, II, 380.

2. *Luminary*, III, 43; IV, 170.

3. *George Washington University Bulletin*, XX, 54.

was general agent until his death in 1833. Their efforts enabled the College to reopen permanently in 1828 with Stephen Chapin (1778-1845) as president.⁴

Academies

Academies, established by noted educators who had become Baptists, were largely attended by boys from Baptist families. Peter Nelson (1758-1827),⁵ "known throughout Lower Virginia as one of the most distinguished teachers of the State," established "Wingfield Academy" at the "Forks of Hanover." Thomas Nelson, his brother, "a fine classical scholar," conducted "Humanity Hall Academy" in Hanover. Here in 1820-23 Robert Ryland completed the courses in Latin, Greek and Mathematics for entrance to Columbian College.⁶ Semple conducted a school for many years at "Mordington," his home in King and Queen County.

The Education Society and the Seminary

It became apparent that these schools could not meet the need for education of the increasing number of young ministers. During the sessions of the General Association in Richmond, there was "a numerous meeting of brethren held at the Second Baptist Church on June 8, 1830, at 5 A.M. for devising and proposing some plan for the improvement of young men, who in the judgment of the churches are called to the work of the ministry. John Kerr was called to the chair and James B. Taylor appointed secretary." Edward Baptist, William F.

4. Its name was changed in 1873 to "Columbian University" and in 1904 to "George Washington University," when its Baptist connections were severed.

5. Peter Nelson was minister of St. Martin's Episcopal Church in Hanover. (Meade, I, 420.) "Recommendatory letter from Peter Nelson, esq., Professor of Wingfield Academy, Hanover" on p. viii of Semple's *History*. He became a Baptist about 1808. (*Evangelical Inquirer*, 290.)

6. Robert Ryland in *Religious Herald*, April 27, 1893. The site of "Humanity Hall" is 2/3 miles from Hewlett Station on the Chesapeake & Ohio Railway.

Broaddus, J. B. Jeter, Henry Keeling and James B. Taylor were appointed to draw up a plan. This committee deemed it "probably inadvisable at the present time to attempt the establishment of a seminary of learning" and asked that the deepest interest in the success of Columbian College be cherished and manifested by contributions and prayers. But it believed that much might be done by placing beneficiaries "in the families of experienced ministering brethren whose education, libraries and opportunity to give instruction may enable them to render essential service to their younger brethren." The beneficiaries might employ their "gifts" by preaching to churches in the adjacent country "willing to contribute by subscription, produce and clothing to their support."⁷

The report of the committee, recommending an organization to be called the "Virginia Baptist Education Society" and proposing a constitution was adopted. Membership for an individual cost two dollars annually or thirty dollars for life. Churches or societies were entitled to one representative for each ten dollars contributed. Officers elected were John Kerr, president; Edward Baptist, 1st vice-president; Eli Ball, 2nd vice-president; Henry Keeling, corresponding secretary; James B. Taylor, recording secretary and Richard C. Wortham, a Richmond layman, treasurer. Additional managers were Andrew Broaddus of Caroline, William F. Broaddus of Culpeper, Samuel Cornelius of Alexandria, Robert T. Daniel of Southampton, James Fife of Goochland, R. B. C. Howell of Norfolk, J. B. Jeter of Lancaster, James Leftwich of Bedford, Valentine M. Mason of Rockbridge, Luther Rice of Washington, Daniel Witt of Prince Edward and Jesse Witt of Bedford, ministers; and Nimrod Branham of Albemarle, James C. Jordon of Isle of Wight, George Love of Loudoun, John Steger of Amelia, James C. Crane, William Crane, Thomas H. Fox, George R. Myers, James Sizer, Archibald Thomas and Madi-

7. Ms. Minutes of Virginia Baptist Education Society.

son Walthall of Richmond, with Richard Gregory, Baptist laymen.

At its meeting in August the Board adopted two courses of study, one "Literary," covering the subjects "required for admission into the Columbian or any other regular College"; the other "Theological," embracing "the devout and critical study of the Bible, in pursuing which the student shall attend to Sacred History, Theology, natural and revealed, Biblical Criticism, Ecclesiastical History, Sacred Rhetorick and Composition."⁸ Provision was made for those whose circumstances and the means of the Society might not permit to go through a regular course of study.

Edward Baptist, A.B. (1813) and A.M. (1815) of Hampden-Sydney College, was engaged as teacher and in October, 1830, the school was opened at "Dunlora," the 900-acre estate in Powhatan County of Mrs. Ann Hickman, where Baptist resided. The whole management of the education of the beneficiaries was "confided to the judgment, integrity and piety" of Baptist. He made no charge for teaching and Mrs. Hickman gave them room and board at \$60 for the scholastic year, which "could scarcely be supposed to save her from considerable loss, independently of trouble."⁹

There were six students the first year. Their activity in preaching started a revival in the vicinity that during the spring and summer spread into the surrounding country. "Their studies were greatly interrupted but it made the more contracted brethren more disposed to view the institution, not as a ministerial factory, where we were manufacturing preachers by education, but as a school for the improvement of the gifts and talents God had already bestowed."¹⁰

8. Ms. Minutes of the Virginia Baptist Education Society.

9. Report of the Board in the *Religious Herald*, June 17, 1831. Mrs. Hickman was the widow of William Hickman, who died in 1815. She was aunt and foster mother of Eliza Eggleston, whom Baptist had married. Here Baptist's family made their home until they and Mrs. Hickman moved to Alabama in 1835.

10. Baptist's Ms. *Diary*.

The next year brought the total number at Dunlora to nine¹¹ and four others were placed in the home of Eli Ball in Henrico.¹² As Baptist's health would not permit his becoming permanent instructor after the second year, and it was found that the number of students would be increased, the Society bought "Spring Farm," four miles north of Richmond, for \$4,000, to be paid annually in four instalments. The title was conveyed to eleven trustees, each connected with some regular Baptist church, to hold in trust for the Society.¹³ There were buildings to house temporarily the teacher, the steward and twenty students. Manual labor on the 240-acre farm for three hours five days in the week was required for "the preservation of the student's health . . . mental vigor and cheerfulness of temper."¹⁴

Robert Ryland (1805-1899)¹⁵ was engaged to take charge and on July 4, 1832, the Virginia Baptist Seminary was opened with ten students. At the beginning of the second term in February, 1833, there were twenty. The *Brief Sketch*, published the next summer, gave the names of twenty-six. Sixteen were "beneficiaries," approved by the churches for the ministry, whose tuition was without cost.¹⁶ The others were "moral youths" who defrayed all of their expenses. Their tuition fees were the only source of the salaries of the instructors as contributions to the Society were exhausted in payment of the board of the beneficiaries.¹⁷ The subjects taught as "the chief

11. Thomas W. Sydnor recalled as fellow students, William Allgood, S. F. Burnley, Richard N. Herndon, J. D. McAllister, Stephen McClenney, A. P. Repiton, J. P. Turner and Joseph S. Walthall (*Virginia Baptist Ministers*, III, 36).

12. *Brief Sketch of the Origin and Progress of the Virginia Baptist Education Society*, 3.

13. Virginia Baptist Education Society Ms. Minutes, 43.

14. Manual labor combined with study was a popular experiment tried by a number of educational institutions at that time. *Brief Sketch*, 3, 7.

15. Robert Ryland graduated from Columbian College in 1826 and was pastor in Lynchburg, 1827-32.

16. Three of these went as missionaries—Robert D. Davenport to Siam, William Mylne to Liberia and J. Lewis Shuck to China.

17. Robert Ryland, *The Society—The Seminary—The College*.

elements of a solid education" were English, Latin, Greek and Mathematics. The Board was:

. . . unwilling to encourage devotion to any system of divinity prepared by human wisdom, yet it thought indispensably important to attend to many collateral studies, in the investigation of the sacred volume. The Bible is a figurative book. Its almost numberless allusions, and consequently its rich truths, cannot be understood without some knowledge of the manners and customs of the ancients, and the geography and natural history of the East.

A class had been formed in "the evidences of the christian religion, the authenticity of the sacred scriptures, and the history of the church up to the present time."¹⁸ Eli Ball was engaged for a year as an assistant teacher.

In 1834 "Spring Farm" was sold¹⁹ and "Columbia" was bought from Mrs. Clara Haxall for \$9,500. It comprised 7¾ acres in the suburbs of Richmond, one and a half miles from the State capitol, a brick mansion²⁰ and outbuildings which would "accommodate seventy students and furnish rooms for the teachers, a chapel and recitation rooms."

James B. Taylor, "a gratuitous agent for the Board," reported at its December meeting in 1834, that he "had everywhere been cordially received, that the object had a strong hold on the affections of the brethren," that he had obtained subscriptions of \$4,000 and that \$1,300 had been collected and applied to the payment on Columbia.²¹

The Seminary was moved in December, 1834. The catalogue published in January, 1835,²² lists sixty students in the three years of literary and a fourth year of theological studies, an in-

18. *Brief Sketch*.

19. "Spring Farm" was sold for \$3,000 cash. The remainder of one thousand dollars due for that property was paid off.

20. Now on the corner of Grace and Lombardy in Richmond.

21. Ms. Minutes of the Virginia Baptist Education Society.

22. Printed at the office of the *Herald*, by R. D. Davenport.

crease of thirty-nine over the year before. Modern and Ancient Geography and Chronology; History, Ancient and Modern; Natural and Mental Philosophy were included in the curriculum. Caleb Burnley²³ and William F. Nelson, A.M.,²⁴ had been added to the faculty. Robert Ryland accepted the invitation of the University of Virginia to be its chaplain for the academic year 1835-6 and Nelson acted as principal "with fidelity, diligence and acceptance."²⁵

23. "Mr. Caleb Burnley, of Culpeper, proved to be a genial companion and an efficient tutor." (*The Society—The Seminary—The College*, 13.) He resigned at the end of the session and conducted an academy in Jeffersonton until his death in 1863.

24. Nelson, "formerly of Georgetown College, Kentucky, recently of Newton Theological Institute, Mass.," moved back to Kentucky in 1842. (Ms. Minutes of the Society, 292.)

25. Minutes of the Sixth Annual Meeting of the Virginia Baptist Education Society."

THE CONTROVERSY WITH ALEXANDER Campbell and the Reformers 1823 - 1833

THOMAS CAMPBELL came from Northern Ireland to America in 1807 and his son, Alexander (1788-1866), two years later. They were Presbyterians, members of the "Anti-Burgher" branch of "Seceders" from the established Church of Scotland.¹ Thomas was an ordained minister of this group. Alexander, during a year in the University of Glasgow, had become acquainted with the views of Glas, Sandeman and the Haldanes—many of them identical with those he afterwards taught.² They settled on Buffalo Creek in Brooke County, Virginia, and organized a church on Brush Run. In 1812 they were baptized by Matthew Luce, a Baptist minister nearby, and the next year Brush Run was received by the Redstone Baptist Association.³

In 1823 Alexander Campbell at Buffalo, Virginia (now Bethany, West Virginia) began the monthly publication of *The Christian Baptist*. In it he attacked Missionary, Bible, Sunday School and Tract societies as "engines" of "priestly ambition."⁴ He contended that there was no New Testament

1. The "Seceders" had left the Church of Scotland in protest against "patronage," which deprived congregations of the right of selecting their own pastors. The "Anti-Burghers" objected to members who were office holders having to subscribe to an oath to defend "the religion presently professed in this realm." (W. E. Garrison, *Religion Follows the Frontier*, 73.) Thomas Campbell's father had left the Episcopal Church of his father to become a Presbyterian, and this Episcopalian grandfather had renounced the Roman Catholic faith of his father. (Garrison, 85.)

2. Garrison, 82.

3. Garrison, 103.

4. *Christian Baptist*, III, 59.

example for sending a missionary “without the power of working miracles,” and caricatured the setting apart of missionaries to Burma.⁵ He opposed the ordination of ministers and the payment to them of a fixed salary, a pastor’s having care of more than one church, the organization of churches into associations which he thought tended to become legislative bodies, the adoption by churches and associations of confessions of faith which he considered to be creeds, the requirement of a religious “experience” prior to baptism and all else that he could not find specifically in the New Testament. He endeavored to bring about reforms in the practices of the churches and “A Restoration of the Ancient Order of Things.”⁶

When the Dover Association met at Upper Essex in 1825 its pastor, Thomas M. Henley, invited Campbell to attend. Interest in his ideas and the fame of his debate on Baptism with two Presbyterian ministers (John Walker in Ohio in 1820 and W. L. Maccalla in Kentucky in 1823) drew a crowd “intent to hear the renowned stranger” and his sermon was listened to with unflagging attention. The next day, after the close of the Association, he preached by invitation at Bruington, where Semple was pastor, and the next night at the Second Baptist Church in Richmond, pastored by David Roper. Campbell’s sermons impressed his older and more discriminating auditors with “ability which might be usefully employed.” “It was hoped that association with Baptists and a more careful study of the Scripture would soon correct any errors into which he had fallen.”⁷ Semple promised to correspond with him and in December, 1825 sent him a long letter. It read in part:

I have taken the Christian Baptist from its beginning, i.e., I have read them from their first publication, and my opinion has been uniformly the same. That, although sensible and edited with ability, it has been deficient in a very important point, *a New Testament spirit*.

5. *Christian Baptist*, I, 53, 57.

6. *Christian Baptist*, II, 47, 152, 175.

7. Jeter, *Recollections*, 133-5.

. . . This, may I say, is the most serious objection to the *Debate on Baptism*. That book exhibits baptism in a most lucid point, sufficient, I should think, to convince every pedo-baptist that may ever read it. But the bitterness of the expressions unfortunately blinds their minds with resentment, so as to stop up the entrance to truth. . . .

Your opinions on some other points are, I think, dangerous, unless you are misunderstood, such as casting off the Old Testament, exploding experimental religion in its common acceptation, denying the existence of gifts in the present day commonly believed to exist among all spiritual christians, such as preaching, &c. Some other of your opinions, though true, are pushed to extremes, such as those upon the use of creeds, confessions, &c., &c. Your views of ministerial support, directed against abuses on that head, would be useful, but leveled against all support to ministers (unless by way of alms) is so palpably contrary to scripture and common justice, that I persuade myself that there must be some misunderstanding. In short your views are generally so contrary to those of the Baptists in general, that if a party was to go fully into the practice of your principles I should say a new sect had sprung up, radically different from the Baptists, as they now are. . . .

Shall I close by telling you that we all feel much interest in your welfare personally, that your mild and sociable manners, &c procured among us not respect only, but brotherly love and Christian affection, and that much of your preaching was admired for its eloquence and excellency, and if you would dwell upon those great points, chiefly, such as faith, hope, charity, &c., you would be viewed by us as having a special command from *Him*, whom we hope you love, to feed his lambs and his sheep.

By way of apology for you, and a small compliment to our folks, I was really struck while you were among us that the acrimonious treatment which you had received from others had pushed you to certain severities and singularities, which if you dwelt among us, you would relinquish.⁸

In 1826 Andrew Broaddus, of Caroline, under the pen name, "Paulinus," began in the *Christian Baptist* a discussion of the "principles and sentiments" maintained by Campbell. So far

8. Campbell published it with his reply in the *Christian Baptist*, III, 197. Later letters by Semple up to 1831, the year of his death, with Campbell's rejoinders appeared in the *Baptist* and in the *Harbinger*.

as he had seen, Broaddus found "much to approve, something to doubt, and something, too, from which I must dissent."⁹ This argument between them continued throughout the life of the *Christian Baptist* and was renewed in the *Millennial Harbinger*, which replaced it in 1830. Broaddus was writing also for the *Religious Herald* on the same subject under the pen name "Christianos."

The *Harbinger* published as a supplement to its regular number for July, 1830, an *Extra* of sixty pages, and in December, *Extra—No. II* of sixty-eight pages. In them Campbell presented his teachings on the "Remission of Sins" and related subjects. He reprinted an article in the *Religious Herald* by Andrew Broaddus ("Christianos"), and replied to it and to articles in the *Herald* by Edward Baptist ("No Theorist"). Baptist (as "Philander") then criticised the *Extras* in another series of articles in the *Herald*. *The Extra Examined*, in fifty-six pages, by Andrew Broaddus in April, 1831, was followed in October by Campbell's *The Extra Defended*.

Eli Ball in the editorial columns of the *Religious Herald* and A. W. Clopton, writing from Charlotte to the *Christian Index* of Philadelphia,¹⁰ assailed Campbell's teaching that baptism was an essential part in the remission of sins and the appropriation of God's promise of forgiveness. This was directly opposed to the Baptist position that baptism is the outward symbol of the change already accomplished in the believer whose heart had been touched and his life changed by the influence of the Holy Spirit.

As points of difference¹¹ were developed churches were rent by disputes and discord.

"Mainly through the influence of A. W. Clopton"¹² the first formal action taken in Virginia was by the Appomattox Asso-

9. *Christian Baptist*, IV, 8.

10. Jeter, *Clopton*, 150.

11. Garrison, 104.

12. Jeter, *Clopton*, 149.

ciation at its meeting in May, 1830. On motion of P. P. Smith, the following resolutions were adopted:

Whereas, there is satisfactory evidence, that the writings of Alexander Campbell have exerted a very mischievous influence upon members of Baptist Churches, stirring up envy and strife, and fomenting divisions among those who had before lived in fellowship and peace. *And whereas*, it appears from the Minutes of the Beaver Association that Mahoning Association has been cut off from the fellowship of the neighbouring Associations for maintaining or countenancing the following sentiments, or creed, deducible from the writings of the said A. Campbell:

1. They maintain that there is no promise of salvation without baptism.
2. That baptism should be administered to all who say they believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, without examination on any other point.
3. That there is no direct operation of the Holy Spirit on the mind prior to baptism.
4. That baptism produces the remission of sins and the gifts of the Holy Spirit.
5. That the Scriptures are the only evidence of interest in Christ.
6. That obedience places it in God's power to elect to salvation.
7. That no creed is necessary for the Church, but the Scriptures as they stand.
8. That all baptized persons have a right to administer the ordinance of baptism.

Therefore Resolved, That this Association most cordially approves the course adopted by the Beaver and her sister Associations, in withdrawing from the Mahoning.

Resolved, That it be earnestly recommended to all the churches who compose this Association to discountenance the writings of the said Alexander Campbell.

And whereas, we regard the common translation of the Bible sufficiently plain as respects doctrine and ordinances and, as we believe, that a translation suited to the sentiments or creed exposed by the Beaver Association eminently calculated to mislead the feeble minded—spread the leaven of heresy—sow the seeds of discord, debate and strife among brethren, and thus mar the peace of the churches; and

as the abettors of these sentiments, or this creed, profess to derive them from a true and proper interpretation of the New Testament by Dr. Geo. Campbell, McNight and Doddridge, and edited by Alexander Campbell;

Therefore Resolved, That it be earnestly recommended to our churches not to countenance this new translation of the New Testament.

Resolved, That it be recommended to the ministers and churches composing this Association, not to invite into their pulpits any minister who holds the sentiments or creed named above.¹³

Campbell's comment in the *Harbinger* begins: "The Appomattox's Decrees; Or, The Use of Ecclesiastical Councils Exhorted." It concludes:

All the renowned Associations of ecclesiastics in the annals of time have built up the cause of the priesthood against the people; and no instance is on record of one of them turning out in favor of reform, so long as the people would sustain them in their errors.¹⁴

On December 30, 1830, at the call of Bruington, delegates from eight churches belonging to the Dover Association met in conference at Upper King and Queen Meeting House "to take into consideration the state of things produced by the introduction amongst us of the principles and practice known by the name of 'Campbellism'." "An interesting and instructive discourse" was delivered by Robert B. Semple "to a crowded and attentive congregation." Philip Montague was chosen moderator and William Todd, clerk. A committee of nine, with Andrew Broaddus, chairman, was appointed "to sit at night at the house of Col. Reuben M. Garnett"¹⁵ and bring in a report next day. This was considered article by article and, with some amendments, was adopted by the Conference without a dissenting voice. It stated that:

13. The Beaver Association embraced churches in Western Pennsylvania. The Mahoning included churches in Southeastern Ohio and the Campbells' church at Wellsburg, Virginia.

14. *Harbinger*, I, 261.

15. "Spring Farm," near Newtown.

The Baptists as a denomination (making reasonable allowance for difference of opinion in minor matters) have professed and practiced certain leading principles which have been characteristic of them. . . . The system of religion known by the name of Campbellism has spread among our churches to a distressing extent. . . . The errors of this system are various, some of them comparatively unimportant while others appear to be of the most serious and dangerous tendency.

The Conference resolved:

1. That we consider the gracious operations of the Holy Spirit, in the regeneration and salvation of a soul, as a fundamental doctrine of the Scriptures, and universally maintained by Baptists (such as we hold in fellowship) in all countries.

2. That to maintain baptism to be conversion—regeneration—the new birth, and that in baptism sins are actually (not figuratively) washed away, is a radical error, founded in popery, and ought not to be countenanced.

3. That we consider the doctrine of repentance (or penitence for sin) as held among us, and as set forth in the Scriptures, to be of vital importance; and that, in its room to substitute reformation (as is generally understood) tends to subvert one of the main pillars of the christian religion.

4. That to maintain the sufficiency of human nature to purposes of salvation, with the mere written word, and without the gracious influence and aid of the Holy Spirit, is, in our view, a plain contradiction of the word of God, a denial of a fundamental doctrine held among Baptists, and a vain attempt to introduce the Pelagian scheme, long since exploded.

5. That we recommend to our churches, that when any of their membership shall maintain all or any of these radical errors, that, in love and tenderness, they endeavor to convince them of their errors; but in the event of failing in the object, that in the fear of God and in the spirit of faithfulness, and after reasonable forbearance, they declare non-fellowship with such, and separate them from their communion as offenders against God and truth.

6. That in regard to *practice*, we advise that our churches take a decided stand against the disorderly and disorganizing measures pursued by some of the preachers of this party, in going among the churches and administering baptism upon their new plan—flying in

the face of all church order, trampling down all former usage among Baptist churches and disregarding the peace of the churches, and especially of the pastors. Such a course being subversive of all order and regular church government, ought to receive the most prompt and decided reprehension from the churches.

7. That persons thus baptized ought not to be received into any Baptist church of regular standing, but upon strict examination as to experience, moral standing and the motives which induced them to such a step. Conscious, however, that many pious and well meaning persons may be misled by these preachers, we would advise that every degree of gentleness and affection be exercised towards them.

Campbell called these "The Semples and Broaddus Decrees" and "a bill of indictment to every item of which we plead *not guilty*."¹⁶

The tension within the churches increased. Following the preaching of Thomas Campbell in Richmond in January, 1832, The First Baptist Church adopted in February a statement:

Whereas, it is evident that a party has arisen in this Church entertaining opinions of Scripture doctrine and Church government materially different from those of the great body of this Church and all the Regular Baptist churches in Virginia; and *whereas*, out of these discordant opinions and views a state of feeling has grown very unfavorable to the peace, honor and piety of the Church—therefore

Resolved, That this Church earnestly recommends to those who have embraced these new doctrines and opinions to withdraw from us and become a separate people worshipping God according to their own views of propriety.¹⁷

Accordingly sixty-eight members withdrew. Forty-six "came together on the principles of the current Reformation and formed 'Old Sycamore Church'."¹⁸

The Goshen Association in September, 1832, received a query from the Fork Church:

16. The Proceedings of the Conference were printed in the *Religious Herald* and copied in the *Harbinger*, II, 77.

17. *Religious Herald*, March 9, 1832. Hodge, 81.

18. *A Century With Christ*, 65.

Does this Association think it orderly to keep in her fellowship any church which keeps in its fellowship and supports as a pastor a preacher of the Reforming or Campbellite order?

The Association, "without debate and with great unanimity,":

Resolved, That this Association will not keep in her fellowship any church which countenances the preaching of any minister, or the course of any individuals, who hold fellowship with Mr. Alexander Campbell.

At the meeting of the Dover Association at Four Mile Creek in October, 1832, on motion of J. B. Jeter a committee was appointed "to take under consideration the unfortunate division by which some of our churches are agitated, by reason of the new principles both of faith and practice, lately introduced under the specious name of Reform." John Kerr, J. B. Jeter, Peter Ainslie, Philip Montague and James B. Taylor were appointed. They called into counsel Andrew Broaddus, Eli Ball, John Micou, William Hill, Miles Turpin and Erastus T. Montague¹⁹ and reported a recommendation and resolution which were adopted by the Association:

This Association having been from its origin, blessed with uninterrupted harmony, and a high degree of religious prosperity, has seen with unspeakable regret, within a few years past, the spirit of speculation, controversy and strife, growing up among some of the ministers and churches within its bounds. This unhappy state of things has evidently been produced by the preaching and writings of Alexander Campbell and his adherents. After having deliberately and prayerfully examined the doctrines held, and propagated by them, and waited long to witness their practical influence upon the churches, and upon society in general, we are thoroughly convinced that they are doctrines, not according to godliness, but subversive of the true Spirit of the

19. Kerr was pastor of the First Church of Richmond, Jeter of Moratico, Ainslie of Grafton, Montague of Piscataway (Mt. Zion), Taylor of the Second of Richmond, Broaddus of Salem, Ball of Deep Run, Hill of Upper King and Queen, Micou of Enon. Turpin, at whose home the Committee met, was pastor of Four Mile Creek. Erastus T. Montague, clerk of the Association, was a member of Glebe Landing and a leading lawyer in Middlesex County.

Gospel of Jesus Christ—disorganizing and demoralizing in their tendency; and therefore, ought to be disavowed and resisted by all the lovers of truth and sound piety. It is needless to specify and refute the errors held and taught by them; this has been often done, and as often have the doctrines quoted from their writings been denied, with the declaration, that they are misrepresented or misunderstood.

If, after more than seven years of investigation, the most pious and intelligent men in the land are unable to understand what they speak and write, it surely is an evidence of some radical defect in the things taught, or in the mode of teaching them. Their views of sin, faith, repentance, regeneration, baptism, the agency of the Holy Spirit, church government, the Christian ministry and the whole scheme of Christian benevolence are, we believe, contrary to the plain letter and spirit of the New Testament of our Lord and Saviour.

By their practical influence, churches long blessed with peace and prosperity have been thrown into wrangling and discord—principles long held sacred by the best and most enlightened men that ever lived or died are vilified and ridiculed as “school divinity,” “sectarian dogmas,” &c. Ministers who had counted all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus are reprobated and denounced as “visionary dreamers,” “mystifiers,” “blind leaders of the blind,” “hireling priests,” &c. The church in which many of them live, and from which they call it persecution to be separated, is held up to public scorn as “Babylon, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth.” The most opprobrious epithets are unsparingly applied to principles and practices which we think are clearly taught in the Word of God and which we hold dear to our hearts. While they arrogate to themselves the title of “Reformers,” it is lamentably evident that no sect in Christendom needs reformation more than they do.²⁰

While they boast of superior light and knowledge, we can but lament, in their life and conversation the absence of that wisdom, “that is from above, which is first pure, then peaceable, gentle and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.” In fine, the writings of Alexander Campbell, and the spirit and manner of those who profess to admire his writings and sentiments, appear to us remarkably destitute of “the mind that was in Christ Jesus,” of that divine love “which suffereth long and is kind, envieth not, vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself

20. “No sect” was amended in 1833 to read “but few sects.”

unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil." Wherever these writings and sentiments have to any extent been introduced into our churches, the spirit of hypercriticism, "vain janglings and strife about words to no profit but to the subverting of the hearers," have chilled the spirit of true devotion and put an end to Christian benevolence and harmony.

If the opprobrious epithets and bitter denunciations so liberally heaped upon us by Mr. Campbell and his followers are deserved, they as pious and honorable men cannot desire to live in communion with us; and if they are undeserved and designedly slanderous, this of itself, would forbid our holding them in Christian fellowship. If indeed they have found the lost key of knowledge and are the only persons, since the days of the Apostles, who have entered and explored Divine Arcanum, it is due to themselves—to purblind Christendom—to the world—to truth—to God that they should in obedience to the divine command, clothed in the shining garments of truth and righteousness, walk out of "Babylon" and concentrating their light, exhibit a true sample of the "ancient order of things" and diffuse around them a blaze of "love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." It would seem that conscientious, unobstrusive, holy men, whose hearts are sickened with the depravity of the times and who mourn a sad and general departure from truth and holiness, would voluntarily come out from "the present corrupt order of things," and holding sweet communion with one another and with their God, let their light so shine that others seeing their good works might be induced to glorify their father in heaven. But alas! they appear to be a strange *anti-sectarian dogmatical sect*, who live only in the fire of strife and controversy and who seek to remain in connection with existing churches, that they may with the greater facility obtain materials for feeding the disastrous flame.

In every aspect of the case, then, a separation is indispensably necessary. The cause of truth and righteousness requires it—the best interests of all the parties concerned demand it.

We, therefore, the assembled ministers and delegates of the Dover Association, after much prayerful deliberation do hereby affectionately recommend to the churches in our connection, to separate from their communion all such persons as are promoting controversy and discord under the specious name of "Reformers." That the line of distinction may be clearly drawn, so that all who are concerned may understand

it, we feel it our duty to declare that, whereas, Peter Ainslie, John Duval, Matthew W. Webber, Thos. M. Henley, John Richards and Dudley Atkinson, ministers in the bounds of this Association, have voluntarily assumed the name of "Reformers," in its party application, by attending a meeting publicly advertised for that party, and by communing with, and otherwise promoting the views of the members of that party, who have been separated from the fellowship and communion of regular Baptist churches—²¹

Resolved, That this Association cannot consistently, and conscientiously receive them or any other ministers maintaining their views; or can they in future act in concert with delegates from any church or churches, that may encourage, or countenance their ministrations.²²

The next year (1833) Grafton divided and the Dover Association recognized the delegates sent by the minority. Cheesecake in York and Emmaus in Matthews were "considered withdrawn."²³ For "having espoused the cause known by the name of the Reformation" Chickahominy was excluded and the minority was admitted as "Bethlehem" (Winns). Mangohick was excluded and its minority was admitted as "Union at Mangohick." Upper College was excluded and its minority was received in 1834 as "Rehoboth" (Sharon), worshipping in the Colonial church building called "Cattail." Lower College was excluded and in 1837 was "reconstituted" and readmitted as "Colosse."

By April, 1833, when the "Reformers" held their first "Co-operative Meeting" at Acquintain Church in King William,²⁴ separation had taken place generally but agitation continued in some of the associations. In 1834 Dover Church was excluded from the Association that bore its name and was not reinstated until 1842.

21. Ainslie was pastor of Grafton, Duval of Lower College, Richards of Axol (Exol), Atkinson of Upper College, Webber of Dover. Henley, pastor of Upper Essex, "had not been considered, for some time past, as in our connection. (Dover Minutes, 1832, p. 8n.)

22. Campbell's "comment" on the "Dover Ordinance" is in the *Harbinger*, III, 10.

23. Emmaus was reorganized and readmitted in 1836.

24. *Harbinger*, III, 286. Hodge, 96.

At its meeting in 1834 the Middle District refused to receive James M. Jeter and Silas Shelbourne, prominent "Reformers," as messengers from the Meherrin. The next year the Middle District "unanimously cut off Chestnut Hill in consequence of having identified herself with those who have embraced the peculiarities of Alexander Campbell."

A three way controversy in the Meherrin Association between the "Missionary Baptists," the "Anti-mission element and the "Reformers" tore the Association to pieces. In July, 1832, representatives from mission minded churches met and issued a call for the organization of an association to be called "Concord." At its first meeting in July, 1833, at James-Square in Brunswick there were delegates from Sandy Creek in Charlotte, Bluestone, a new church at Clarksville, Concord and Malone's. Cut Bank in Dinwiddie and Reedy Creek in Brunswick transferred from the Portsmouth.²⁵ Robert T. Daniel was moderator and Charles King, clerk.

In 1836 the Albemarle Association highly approved the course of the Charlottesville Church in separating from former members and her former pastor, R. L. Coleman, "on account of their embracing the sentiments of A. Campbell." For the same reason the Association withdrew fellowship from Corinth Church and from R. L. Coleman, James W. Goss and James W. Poindexter, ministers in the Association.

25. Portsmouth Association Minutes, 1830, 1832.

The "Anti" - Movement

1831 - 1891

VIRGINIA Baptists did not escape the wave of reaction against the spread of missionary activity, the promotion of education, Sunday schools and temperance and societies for the dissemination of the Bible and tracts—"the benevolent institutions of the day." This opposition was based on the ultra Calvinistic belief in the absolute predestination of all things. Semple warned that:

To preach the deep mysterious doctrines of grace upon all occasions, and before all sorts of people, is the sure way to preach them out of the parts. To give to any one doctrine more weight than the proportion found in the scripture, defaces the beauty of the whole, and retards its progress.

In noting the decline of the Kettocton Association since the Great Revival and the increase of the Methodists, Semple asks:

Have they succeeded, as in some other places, in driving the Baptist preachers, imperceptibly, to dwell too much upon high Calvinistic points to the neglect of the more simple but more important principles of Christianity?¹

A meeting of "Particular Baptists of the Old School"² convened at the Black Rock Meeting House in Baltimore County, Maryland, in September, 1832. William Gilmore and Henry Moon were present from Virginia.³ Gilmore was elected mod-

1. Semple, 286, 296.

2. Believers in "Particular Atonement" as opposed to a "General Atonement." "Old School, i.e. the school of Christ, in distinction from other schools which have sprung up since the apostles' days." (*Signs of the Times*, I, 2n.)

3. Gilmore was pastor of New Valley, North Fork and Leesburg in Loudoun, and Upperville in Fauquier. Moon was a licentiate of New Valley. In 1836 the Kettocton minutes stated that his moral character was such that it cautioned against countenancing him as a preacher.

erator. An address was adopted stating that they "esteemed those things to be of no use to the cause of Christ, which he had not himself instituted," and giving at length some of the objections to "the principal of these modern inventions"—Tract Societies, Sunday Schools, the Bible Society, Missions, Colleges, Theological Schools and "Four days or protracted meetings," "where all the borrowed machinery from Methodist camp-meetings is introduced." The address continued:

There is one radical difference between us and those who advocate these various institutions. They declare the gospel to be a system of means; these means they believe to be of human contrivance, and they act accordingly. But we believe the gospel dispensation to embrace a system of faith and obedience and we would act according to our belief. With all who love our Lord Jesus Christ, in truth, and walk according to apostolic traditions, or gospel order, we would gladly meet in church relations and engage with them in the worship and service of God, as he himself has ordered them. But if they will persist in bringing those institutions, for which they can show us no example in the New Testament, into the churches or associations, and in making them the order thereof, we shall for conscience sake, be compelled to withdraw from the disorderly walk of such churches, associations or individuals, that we may not suffer our names to pass as sanctioning those things for which we have no fellowship. And if persons who pass for preachers come to us bringing the messages of men, etc., a gospel which they have learned in the schools instead of that gospel which Christ himself commits unto his servants, and which is not learned of men, they must not be surprised that we cannot acknowledge them as ministers of Christ.⁴

In 1826 William Fristoe, on account of infirmities of age, resigned the pastorate of Bethel Church in Frederick County, a member of the Kettocton Association. He was followed by William F. Broaddus, who was pastor also in the Shiloh Association of F. T. Church,⁵ where he had been ordained in 1824,

4. *Signs of the Times*, I, 2-8.

5. "F. T. Church" was so called from its location on a tract of land in Culpeper (now in Rappahannock County) taken up by Francis Thornton and called F. T. Valley.

and of Mount Salem. From 1825 he was sent regularly as corresponding messenger from the Shiloh to the Kettocton Association. Fristoe had not been able to take an active part in the meetings of the Association and the antimission spirit was ascendant in most of the churches. "The young pastor at Bethel thought it his duty to direct the minds of the people of his charge to the work of spreading the Gospel." His motion in 1826 that the Kettocton Association appoint messengers to the General Association of Virginia was defeated. The next year the letter from Bethel to the Association "expressed its sympathy with the mission cause and asked that the Association would inaugurate a systematic method for raising money to aid in supplying the destitute with the Word of Life. This met with violent opposition and prominent members of the body declared that they had no fellowship with Baptists who favored missionary efforts." Bethel entered into auxiliary relations with the General Association but refrained as far as possible from everything that might lead to division. While the members "claimed the right to contribute their money according to their own conscientious views of personal duty, they carefully avoided any offensive effort to enlist others, leaving all to act for themselves."⁶

Broaddus' continued effort for the salvation of the unconverted had already exposed him to the charge of heterodoxy by those who held that only by the direct action of the Holy Spirit, without human intermediary, could a man foreordained for salvation be brought to God. "Many around me," wrote Broaddus,⁷ "for whose piety and integrity I entertain much respect, are in sentiment hyper-Calvinists, that is, what I would denominate half predestinarians. They decry all attempts to hasten (as they say) the work of the LORD." "Do you know what I mean by a half predestinarian? It is one who believes

6. Broaddus, *Centennial Sermon*, 23.

7. Letter of October 1, 1829, to Reuben Coleman, Scottsville, Virginia.

that God has predestined the *end* only, without the means. I believe that God has predestined not only the salvation of his people, but all the means to accomplish it.”

As Broaddus passed through Upperville on the way to and from Bethel he was urged to preach there by members of the Upperville Church, of which William Gilmore was pastor. This invitation Broaddus accepted and in 1831 commenced to preach in the meeting house monthly.

Broaddus had shared the prejudices general in his section of Virginia against the practices current in the conduct of “protracted” or “four day” meetings. But at the session of the General Association in 1831 in conversation with Fife, Baptist, Kerr, Taylor and others their advantages were pointed out, the objections made by Broaddus were met and he was urged to make trial of them. He held one at Mount Salem and “from that meeting may be dated the commencement of those glorious revivals with which most of the churches in the Shiloh Association were blessed in 1831 and 1832.”⁸ Broaddus wrote to the *Herald*.⁹

We had long been in a very cold state. Some few of our churches had made additions to their number, but generally speaking, our cause was declining in all this region. Most of our brethren here were accustomed to view such a state of things as absolutely necessary to fill out some divine arrangement, and were making no exertion to bring about a favorable change. Our ministers preached but little to sinners, and but a few sinners were awakened. Many, however, were praying for a revival, and hoping that God would make known His power amongst us. It came, however, in a way which did not meet the approbation of many who had been in the habit of saying “Arminianism,” whenever anything was proposed to which they had not been accustomed. The practice of calling upon sinners to kneel to be prayed for, or to take seats apart from the multitude, was introduced, and although our churches almost in every instance disapproved it, the *Lord* evidently accompanied it with His blessing. A more pointed

8. Editorial in *Religious Herald*, September 20, 1833.

9. May 3, 1833.

manner of preaching was observable in our ministers, and sinners were told to "believe in Christ, to the saving of their souls," without any apprehension that too many might "get converted."

After Broaddus had preached in Upperville almost a year he announced that the next meeting would continue two days and that he expected the aid of other ministers. He sent "an affectionate note to Gilmore, requesting him to come and take the direction of the meeting as pastor."¹⁰ Gilmore neither came nor replied. A few days before the date appointed Broaddus received a letter from four members of the church objecting to his preaching. Broaddus went to the Academy building in the village and preached several days. His efforts to reach a harmonious agreement with the church were unsuccessful and ten members of the group to which Broaddus preached organized in 1833 as "The Second Baptist Church of Upperville."

When the Kettocton Association met in 1832, among the messengers from corresponding associations, William F. Broaddus was received from the Shiloh. William Gilmore presented a query from the church at Upperville: "Can or cannot this Association be in fellowship with elder Wm. F. Broaddus and the churches of which he is pastor, under existing circumstances?" John Ogilvie (1793-1849) pastor of Goose Creek in Fauquier, pled that for an association to try a minister who belonged to another association, when there existed between them cordial Christian fellowship, would be contrary to the usage of Baptists everywhere. It was agreed by a large majority that "the query is of such a nature that we think it inexpedient for this Association to decide it."

At the meeting of the Kettocton in 1833 a motion was "made not to recognize elder Broaddus as a messenger." Gilmore, who led the opposition to Broaddus, contended that any deliberative body had a right to decide upon the qualifications of its members without assigning any reason for such decision. Means

10. Broaddus in the *Religious Herald*, February 7, 1834.

had been employed to secure delegates who were prepared to reject Broaddus. Without bringing any specific charges, either of heresy or immorality, a majority voted that he should not have a seat. The delegates from Bethel, James Sowers and William Kerfoot, at once withdrew, declaring that they could not continue members of a body from which their pastor was excluded.¹¹

At the meeting of the Columbia Association in the next week Gilmore was invited to a seat as corresponding member from the Kettocton and Broaddus presented himself as corresponding member from the Shiloh, as he had done in 1829 and 1831. The letter from Elk Run¹² declared "non-fellowship with the doctrines and practice of Elder William F. Broaddus" and requested him not to take a seat in the Association. The committee (Samuel Cornelius, Stephen Chapin and John C. Herndon), to which the letters from the churches were referred, reported in writing four grounds for its decision that "the Association cannot properly take up this business." The report was rejected by the body, whereupon Samuel Trott¹³ moved that the Association consider the question, "Shall Elder William F. Broaddus be accredited as a messenger from the Shiloh Association?" On a recorded vote there were eleven ayes and twenty noes.¹⁴ The next day Stringfellow presented a protest against the proceedings signed by nine of the eleven and requested that it be spread upon the minutes. It was rejected and the messengers from Long Branch withdrew from the Association.

11. Centennial Sermon, 29, 30.

12. The pastor of Elk Run was Alexander H. Bennet, moderator of the Association.

13. Trott (1783-1866) since the last session of the Association had been invited, at the suggestion of William Gilmore, to come from New Jersey to the pastorates of Frying Pan, Bethlehem and Mount Pleasant. He became a resident of Fairfax County and a leader among anti-mission Baptists.

14. The ayes were George Love, clerk of the Association since 1825, and John C. Herndon from Long Branch, of which Broaddus had been pastor since 1828; William Rogers from Little River, H. Harrover and Josiah Clark from Back Lick, John Warder from Nanjemoy, Samuel Cornelius, pastor of Alexandria, Edmund F. Brown and Stephen Chapin from the First Church of Washington, D. C.; Thornton Stringfellow, pastor, and Thomas Gaines from Grove.

The next session of the Columbia passed without reference to the matter but in 1835 Frying Pan Church sent a query to the Association:

This Association, having refused to recognize Elder William F. Broaddus as a Messenger from the Shiloh Association, is it consistent with such declaration for Churches or Preachers connected with it to manifest by their public act a fellowship for him as a Preacher and for the Churches with him?

The Association inserted the query in its minutes and submitted it to the churches with the request that they express their views in their letters to its next session. In 1836 the committee to examine the letters reported that eleven churches by their answers to the query, or by their silence, showed a disapproval of it; that those eleven churches contained 1,688 members, composing more than three-fourths of the whole Association. Six churches, containing 510 members expressed an opinion that the difference ought to be a bar to fellowship and a proper cause for separation. A letter signed by the messengers from Hartwood, Frying Pan, Mount Pleasant, White Oak and Occoquan, withdrawing from the Association, was presented by Samuel Trott and "those churches were considered withdrawn." This secession left the Columbia a peaceful, progressive and missionary minded body. In 1837 correspondence with it was renewed by the Shiloh, which in 1833 had unanimously declined further correspondence with the Columbia and the Kettocton.

Salem Union Association

Bethel and Long Branch, whose delegates had withdrawn in August, 1833, from the Kettocton and Columbia associations when those bodies refused to receive their pastor, William F. Broaddus, as a messenger from the Shiloh Association, called a convention at Long Branch in September, 1833, to consider forming a new association.

The messengers were James Sowers, John Kerfoot, Senior, and William T. Helm from Bethel; George Love, John C. Herndon, Thaddeus Herndon and Charles Adams, from Long Branch; and from four newly constituted churches—Liberty (1832) and Second Upperville (1833) in Fauquier, both pastored by Broaddus; Providence (1833) in Culpeper, Thornton Stringfellow, pastor; and Cedar Creek (1833) in Frederick, pastored by Barnett Grimsley.

The convention resolved unanimously to form a new association and called it "Salem Union." It adopted a constitution, which included in its objects to be attained—"to encourage protracted meetings" and "to aid the Missionary Cause—Bible Societies—Sunday Schools—The Baptist General Tract Society—The Temperance Cause, and every benevolent institution that may tend to dispel ignorance, to promote knowledge, to alleviate suffering humanity and to promote the cause of the Redeemer."

At the first meeting of the Salem Union, in November, 1833, with the Second Church of Upperville, Humphrey Brooke from Bethel was elected moderator and George Love, clerk. The six churches reported 262 white and 276 colored members. It made a donation through Robert Ryland, principal of the Virginia Baptist Seminary, for the benefit of Richard N. and Henry T. Herndon,¹⁵ students in that school, and adopted "A Sketch of Our Views of Divine Truth," in which it stated:

We do not hold ourselves responsible to any other *authority* than the Word of God; but we are always free to communicate *our opinions* as to what the Word of God teaches.

This was published in the minutes as was also a sketch of the history, "the state of religion" and "the benevolent operations" of each of the churches.

15. Thaddeus, Richard Nutt, Traverse D. and Henry T. Herndon, sons of John C. Herndon, all entered the ministry from Long Branch.

The Corresponding Meeting

In October, 1836, Frying Pan, Mount Pleasant, White Oak and Occoquan, which had withdrawn from the Columbia Association, with Bethlehem and a small group of dissidents from the church in Fredericksburg, organized the "Virginia Corresponding Meeting of Old School Baptists." Its declaration of faith took "strong ground against New Schoolism." Samuel Trott was elected moderator and John Clark (1804-82), clerk.¹⁶ In 1848 Trott was pastor of Frying Pan, Mount Pleasant and Ebenezer; Clark of Union, White Oak and Chappawamsic; Robert C. Leachman (1811-69)¹⁷ of Bethlehem and Shiloh; and E. Hansborough of Hartwood. These churches, together with Occoquan which had no pastor, made up the Meeting.

During 1850-52 the Corresponding Meeting was disrupted by the theological views advanced by Gilbert Beebe, editor of the *Signs of the Times*, which from its beginning in 1832 had been the principal organ of the "Old School" Baptists. Beebe held to the absolute predestination of all things. He was supported by Trott and Leachman and opposed by John Clark, who believed that predestination applied only to eternal salvation.¹⁸

The Ebenezer Association and the Kettocton (except for two churches) sided with Clark who, with his three churches, withdrew from the Virginia Corresponding Meeting, joined the Kettocton and in 1854 began the publication at Front Royal of *Zion's Advocate*, a semi-monthly, "Devoted to the Cause of God and Truth." Clark's *Ebenezer Selection of Hymns* came from the press in 1857 and the fourth edition in 1859.

In 1889, on a question of correspondence with other associations, the Occoquan and the Quantico churches withdrew from

16. Smoot, *Reminiscences*, 21.

17. Sketches of John Clark, Robert C. Leachman and Samuel Trott in Pittman, *Biographical History*.

18. Clark's Letter in *Religious Herald*, April 18, 1867.

the Corresponding Meeting and organized the "Virginia Annual Meeting." They were joined later by a part of Frying Pan and by Beulah, newly organized. The pastor of these churches, William M. Smoot, set up a printing press in Occoquan Village, from which he issued monthly, from 1890 until his death in 1939, *The Sectarian Devoted to the Cause of the Anti-Means, Old School, Predestination, or Bible Baptists*. In 1904 he published a collection of 698 hymns, called *The Sectarian*.

The churches left in the Corresponding Meeting in 1890 were Bethlehem in Prince William, Frying Pan in Fairfax, Upper Broad Run in Fauquier, Mount Zion, Ebenezer and New Valley in Loudoun, Mill Creek in Berkeley and Alexandria.¹⁹

In 1891 three churches, Hepzibar in Alexandria, Antioch in Fairfax County and Zion in Washington, D. C., composed of colored members, organized as "The Virginia Corresponding Association of Anti-Means, Old School, Predestination Baptists." N. T. Reed was moderator and Frank Gaskins was clerk.

The Kettocton Association

The day before the Kettocton Association met in 1834 a convention of its churches was held at Broad Run "to take into consideration the doctrinal sentiments of that body, so that a closer union might obtain amongst them." Sixteen churches were represented. Thomas Buck, Senior,²⁰ was called to the chair and P. A. Klipstine was appointed clerk. A motion to appoint a committee to draft a resolution declaring non-fellowship with those who, in any wise, favored the benevolent institutions of the day, as well as those who, were unwilling to break

19. In 1910, Horace H. Lefferts (1879-1949) began pastorates in the Association which lasted forty years. (Pittman, *Biographical History*.)

20. Thomas Buck, Senior's letters "to the Baptists of the Kettocton Association" urging peace and harmony and "that subjects of minor importance ought not to break Christian fellowship" are in the *Religious Herald*, January 28, 1831 and September 13, 1833.

fellowship with them on that account, having failed by a vote of twenty-eight to sixteen, the churches at Upperville, North Fork and Leesburg gave notice that they were no longer members of the Kettocton Association.

The next morning a resolution was offered by Samuel Buck:

That we have no Christian fellowship for those who advocate the Missionary, Bible, Tract or Temperance societies, Sunday School Union, anxious seats or anything of the kind as a religious institution or means of grace; nor with any person who communes with a church which advocates any of those institutions.

The convention resolved:

That although the above is the sense of this convention concerning the benevolent institutions of the day, yet we would refer the matter to the churches composing the Kettocton Association.

At the meeting of the Kettocton Association the next day the committee appointed to investigate the matters of difference between the churches of Leesburg and New Valley reported:

That a long continued course of persevering transgression as manifested in the life of Elder Gilmore, pastor of the Leesburg church, has been recklessly pursued by him although admonished again and again. The church at Leesburg, contrary to the clearest evidence, not only sustains such a man but she has united with him to prostrate the church at New Valley because she dared to raise her voice against such iniquity.

The Association excluded from its fellowship William Gilmore and the churches—Leesburg, North Fork and Upperville—which retained him as pastor.²¹

In 1835 a resolution was carried:

That this Association have no fellowship with any Baptist Church or individual members of a Baptist Church, who connect themselves

21. In 1854 the Association acknowledged that gross injustice had been done to Elder Gilmore and his churches by its action in 1834, and it received both him and them in full fellowship. (Kettocton Minutes, 1856; Ebenezer Minutes, 1857.) In 1858 they "withdrew from the Association voluntarily rather than submit to an investigation." (Kettocton Minutes, 1859.)

with any of the societies commonly known by the name of the Benevolent Institutions of the present day.

In 1836 some of the churches in their letters proposed the rescinding of this resolution. But the Association sustained it and in accordance with it dropped from its membership Broad Run (Cumberland George, pastor), Buck Marsh (Stephen Whittlesey, pastor), and Kettocton (Joseph Baker, pastor).²²

The approval of the Missionary Society in the bounds of the Association was reconsidered and the Association determined to have nothing to do with the Missionary fund in the hands of W. Hunton, the former treasurer.

The Association had now been reduced from nineteen churches with 1,807 members and eleven ministers in 1833 to twelve churches with 697 members and six ministers in 1836. Thomas Buck, Junior, was moderator and Samuel Buck, clerk, as they were from 1830 to 1841.

At a meeting in a private house during the session of the Kettocton Association in 1883 a few elders and pastors belonging to the Kettocton, Ebenezer and other associations covenanted:

To allow the fullest liberty of opinion, not inconsistent with our received articles of faith, provided those opinions are not attempted to be forced upon others.

It left to the churches the question of membership in secret societies, the propriety of feet washing and full liberty of opinion respecting the instructions of children in Bible schools.²³

The minutes of the "Second Kettocton Association" in 1885²⁴ list First Zion, Second Zion, Shiloh and Second Goose Creek, pastored by Jesse Lee; Second Robinson by Henry Abbott; Upperville and Black Rock by Zach Reid. Lee was moderator and J. A. Simms, clerk. The Circular Letter stated: "We do not believe in Sunday-schools and we will not fellowship them."

22. Broad Run was received by the Columbia Association in 1839; Buck Marsh, by Salem Union in 1838, and Kettocton, by Salem Union in 1840.

23. Booton, *Footsteps of the Flock*, 391.

24. Printed by J. B. M'Inturff, Strasburg, Virginia.

The Ebenezer Association

Ebenezer Association in 1834 seated Barnett Grimsley, messenger from the Shiloh, with which it had always corresponded. At the same meeting it resolved that its correspondence with Shiloh and Albemarle associations be discontinued. It refused the request of the newly organized Salem Union for correspondence as "inexpedient under the circumstances." These two actions were cited as an answer to the query:

Will, or will not, Ebenezer Association correspond by letters and messengers with other associations which differ from her in doctrines and practice?

In 1887 a Sunday school was organized in Mount Carmel Church in Luray, a member of the Ebenezer Association. This was with the approval of its pastor, Charles L. Yates, and with the unanimous consent of the Church, following the suggestion of E. H. Burnam, a frequent visitor to the Church and the Association from his home in Richmond, Kentucky. To conciliate the external opposition that sprang up, the catechisms and question books first employed were laid aside and the Bible alone was used. At its meeting in 1887 the Ebenezer Association in its Circular Letter agreed that:

If a church desires a Sunday School she in her sovereign capacity has a right to decide that matter. If another church thinks differently let her too, enjoy her freedom. Yet we should be careful in our great zeal not to give offense to our brethren. Would you destroy the unity of the Church or give offense to your brother by introducing something new among the Primitive Baptists?

In 1890 Yates was not re-elected moderator. Mount Carmel was dropped from the Association on the charge that:

She retains as her pastor, Eld. C. L. Yates, who teaches the doctrine of means and instrumentalities in the regeneration of sinners, advocates Sunday schools, and has been guilty of serving a body of regularly excluded members as their pastor. Furthermore, that a considerable

number of the members of the said Mount Carmel Church, hold, teach and practice the heresies above named and we have no fellowship for such things.

The Circular Letter restated at length the opposition to tract societies, Sunday schools and missionary boards on the ground that they "were never established by the Apostles nor commanded by Christ."

Ketoc-ton Association of Regular Baptists

In October, 1890, the whole or considerable parts of each of eight churches belonging to the Ebenezer or to the Ketoc-ton²⁵ were represented by messenger or letter at Salem in Clarke County. The object of the meeting was:

To reorganize the Ketoc-ton Association upon the principles and practices maintained by that body as originally constituted, and in consequence with the revealed will of God, as found in his Holy Word.

C. L. Yates was elected moderator and A. N. Finks,²⁶ clerk. It adopted the name "Ketoc-ton Association of Regular Baptists" and considered this to be the 124th Anniversary of the Ketoc-ton Association. In testimony of its claim "as the true successors of primitive Christians, and the Philadelphia, Ketoc-ton and other Virginia fathers, and to the right to be called the Ketoc-ton Association" it maintained and reprinted the "Summary of the Leading Principles," included in 1808 by William Fristoe in his *History of the Ketoc-ton Baptist Association*, with this statement:

On the subject of predestination as we do not think our predecessors held or taught, neither do we hold or teach, that the fore-ordination of God extends absolutely to all things whatsoever that come to pass, but absolutely to those only which are good and pertain to life and godliness.

25. They were Mount Carmel, Thornton's Gap, Smith's Creek, Robinson River and Union from Ebenezer; Bethel, Salem and Strasburg from the Ketoc-ton.

26. Finks had been clerk of the Ebenezer, 1880-9.

"Bible schools" were promoted, catechisms favored, the preaching of the Gospel employed for the quickening of sinners, "Gospel Missions," i.e., sending of missionaries directly by the churches and not through boards, was advocated and instruments of music permitted in worship. In 1891 ten churches, pastored by C. L. Yates and J. B. MacInturff, with 299 members belonged to the Association. In 1908 the Association welcomed "Missionary G. P. Bostick of China, E. H. Burnam of Kentucky and C. J. Farncombe of Croyden, England, visiting ministers."²⁷

Battle Run and Thornton's Gap were dismissed by the Shiloh Association in 1834 and Robinson River in 1836. With minority segments of Carter's Run and Gourdvine they formed in 1839 the "Rappahannock Association" on "Old School" principles and practices.²⁸ It was in correspondence with the Ketocton and Ebenezer associations from 1840 until its dissolution in 1856 when four of the churches, Battle Run, Gourdvine, Robinson River and Thornton's Gap joined the Ebenezer.

Other Anti-Mission Associations

In October, 1833, the Strawberry Association took action in regard to the Pig River Association:

Whereas, the majority of the members of the Pig River Association have refused our correspondence, assigning as a cause for so doing that this association is friendly to benevolent institutions of the day—

27. G. P. Bostick of North Carolina, a missionary to China who had severed his connection with the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention and joined the "Gospel Mission" in 1892, while home on a furlough associated himself with the "Regular Baptists." On his return to China he received increasing support from them up to nearly \$1,000 in 1907. Differences having developed, their relations were discontinued in 1910. ("My Connection with and Separation from Regular Baptists by G. P. Bostick, Luray, Va." in *Baptist and Reflector*, Nashville, Tennessee, August 11, 1910.)

Burnum went as a missionary to Mexico. (Pittman's *Mount Carmel Church*, 40.)

Farncombe belonged to the "Strict Baptists" of England.

28. Booten, *Footsteps of the Flock*. Not to be confused with the later Rappahannock formed in 1843.

and whereas, majorities of certain Churches in said Pig River Association Viz: Town Creek, Snow Creek and Stony Creek, acting in the spirit of said Association, have since proceeded to excommunicate certain brethren for entertaining sentiments similar to our own, and for belonging to Temperance Societies—

Resolved, that while we deprecate anything like division amongst brethren, and cordially fraternize with the minorities in said Association and Churches where those high handed measures are pursued, and while we recognize the liberty of anyone to think and act in such matters, according to their own conscience, and would never deny our fellowship to pious brethren, because they disagree with us in sentiment on these subjects: We do, nevertheless, hold it to be our duty, as a denomination, to enter our solemn protest against the conduct of those who, while they encourage by their example the spending of money for ardent spirits and other articles of luxury, do denounce and cast out of the Churches pious and exemplary Christians for no other assigned cause than that they belong to Temperance Societies or are professed friends to Bible, Missionary, Tract and Sabbath School Societies—

Resolved, that we do hereby recommend to the Churches belonging to the Association, that on application they receive into their fellowship our suffering brethren who have been or who shall hereafter be thus excluded. Resolved, that the Association does hereby recommend to our brethren in the ministry, that they visit, and by preaching, baptizing and constituting Churches, afford places of refuge for our oppressed brethren who are thus denied the liberty of conscience as regards the benevolence of the day.

Mayo, made up of churches on both sides of the Virginia-North Carolina line, in 1831 became definitely anti-mission, as did Mountain, which contained a few Virginia churches, New River and Patterson's Creek associations. In Western Virginia Pocatalico was formed in 1835, Tygart's Valley in 1838 and Indian Creek (from Greenbrier) in 1843—all on anti-mission principles.²⁹

Largely because of the growth of anti-mission sentiment in the Roanoke Association³⁰ twelve missionary minded churches

29. Hassell, *Church of God*, 925.

30. G. B. Eager, *A Retrospect* (in Roanoke Minutes, 1889).

in Halifax County—Arbor, Black Walnut, Catawba, Clover, County Line, Cross Roads, Dan River, Hunting Creek, Hyco, Milestone, Muster Field and Winn's Creek—were dismissed from the Roanoke at their request in 1839 to form the Dan River Association. David B. McGehee was elected moderator and Thomas A. Chappell, clerk. The Association resolved:

That the executive board, provided they have the means, shall appoint delegates to the General Association.

In 1841 Mount Ararat, Seneca, Strawberry, Sycamore, Union, Upper Banister and Whitehorn withdrew from the Roanoke and, with Johnson's Creek, formed the Staunton River Association. Joel T. Adams was its first moderator and James Riddle its first clerk. It resolved:

That we will neither correspond nor commune with any church or Association belonging to or favorable to the "Missionary" societies. Neither will we receive any member in our churches who is favorable to the said institutions. That no member amongst us shall invite any "Missionary" preacher, or any that is favorable to it or advocates the cause, to preach in any of the above-named churches.³¹

This left in the Roanoke fifteen churches, reporting in 1842 five ministers and 1,059 members. James H. Stone was moderator. In 1845 there were seven Sunday schools. Griffith Dickenson was clerk from 1822 through 1847. Interest in the missionary and education movements was promoted chiefly by John L. Prichard, pastor in Danville.³² In 1845 he was appointed to lay before the Association the claims of "the Benevolent Societies of Virginia" and take a collection. This amounted to \$23.83 and was equally divided between the General Association, the Virginia and Foreign Bible Society, the Virginia Baptist Education Society and the Virginia Baptist Publication and Sunday School Society. Delegates were appointed to at-

31. Hassell, *Church of God*, 923.

32. Hufham, *Memoir of Prichard*, 38.

tend their next meetings. From this time the Roanoke took part in promoting the larger activities of the denomination.

The Anti-mission movement was less successful in Eastern Virginia. It was promoted in the Accomack Association by T. Waters, T. C. Dilastatius and Pernell T. Outen, who undertook to dissolve the Association at its session in 1831. This was prevented by Levin Dix (1787-1839), moderator, and William Laws (1795-1861), clerk, who rallied the missionary interest.³³ In 1833 "an act of exclusion" was passed against Outen, Dilastatius and others, who had departed from the Association and drawn up a constitution to call themselves the "Accomack Association," and the churches were urged to exclude such of their members as adhere to that party. "At this session the Association threw off the incubus of Antinomionism that had been lying upon it for a quarter of a century like a nightmare." Additions of 142 members were reported and of its seven churches only Messongo was lost on this account.³⁴

The Zoar Association

At the meeting of the Middle District Association in 1835 a majority voted to appoint a delegate to attend the next General Association. Chesterfield (Rehoboth), Sandy Creek in Amelia, Skinquarter and Zoar were opposed³⁵ and withdrew. The next year their representatives met at Zoar meeting house and organized the "Zoar Baptist Association of the Old School

33. Dix was pastor of Lower Northampton and Red Bank, Laws of Modest Town and Pungoteague, Waters of Chincoteague and Messongo; D. M. Woodson of Metompkin. Mashapongo had ceased to exist. Metompkin's house of worship was destroyed by a tornado in 1834 and the church dissolved. Its members were absorbed by Modest Town and Zion. (Williamson, *Baptists on the Eastern Shore*, 23-7.)

34. The meeting house of Messongo is standing but it has been a number of years since a meeting was held on the Eastern Shore of Virginia by the "Old School."

35. Rehoboth in 1833 had excluded Levi Horner for matriculating in the Virginia Baptist Seminary (Minutes of the Virginia Baptist Education Society, May 6, 1833).

of Christ."³⁶ Edmund Goode³⁷ was chairman and Richard Elam, clerk. The constitution stated:

We, as a body, will have no fellowship with the General Association, nor any Association, Church or Society, in connection with the said General Association, upon its present plan of operations; or, who hold in Christian fellowship those who deny, either directly or indirectly, the operations of the spirit of God upon the heart.

The meeting declared:

With the said General Association, we class Missionary, Bible, Tract, Sunday School Union, Temperance or Abstinence, Working Societies of Ladies, &c.—all called benevolent; having directors or members in them who do not profess saving faith in Christ. These Societies, would it not be well to reject for the truth's sake, when in any way blended with religion or the affairs of the Church? We find no such societies spoken of in scripture, and we know of no scriptural rule by which they should be conducted. We, therefore, conclude, they must be the inventions of man and not the command of God; it is written, we ought to obey God rather than men.³⁸

In 1835 Angola, Bethany and Willis withdrew from the James River Association and joined the Zoar Association. Second Branch in 1837 and Salem in 1841 left the Middle District and were received by the Zoar, as was Spring Creek in Prince Edward.³⁹

About 1844 the Zoar Association held its last session. In 1845 the Middle District held its meeting at Salem, which had returned to its fellowship. Sandy Creek and Skinquarter were readmitted in 1848, Chesterfield in 1855⁴⁰ and Second Branch in 1856.

The Washington Association was in cooperation with the General Association in 1845 but it is not mentioned again in its minutes until 1849 when it is listed as "anti-mission."

36. Later called "The Annual Meeting of Old Fashioned Baptists." (Minutes 141-3.)

37. Pastor of Zoar. Moderator of the Middle District, 1831-4.

38. *Proceedings of the Minority of the Middle District Association.*

39. Moore, *History of the Middle District.*

40. Extinct. Another "Chesterfield" Church was constituted in 1909.

Opposition to "the benevolences of the day" in the Albemarle, Appomattox, Dover, Goshen, Portsmouth, Rappahannock and Shiloh was inconsiderable.

Benedict's Conclusion

David Benedict, the contemporary historian, gave it as his "settled opinion" that:

The cause of missions has had but little to do in this business, so very slender is its hold on the minds of the great mass of our community in most parts of the country, however they are distinguished. This is shown by their doings for benevolent objects. The fact is, that personal altercations, rivalry and jealousies and local contests for influence and control, have done much to set brethren at variance with each other. The mission question is the ostensible, rather than the real cause of the trouble, in many places. New men and new measures have run faster than the old travelers were accustomed to go, and they have been disturbed at being left behind. . . . Doctrinal matters have been at the bottom of all the troubles, and predestination has been the bone of contention. The anti-mission party, as near as I can learn, without any exception, are high or hyper-Calvinists, and are so tenacious of the old theory of *particular atonement*, and have so far run the system up to seed, as to persuade themselves that the efforts of modern times are wholly needless, and Arminianism is the bugbear which they profess to fear.⁴¹

The number of "leaners" toward the "Old School" Baptists is much greater than their membership. "There are thousands of people," said Pittman, "who will join no other church because they believe our doctrine, and will not join our church because of a feeling of unworthiness and unfitness."⁴²

41. Benedict, *General History*, 1848, p. 935.

42. Pittman, *Biographical History*, 398.

Growth

*Richmond College, Missionaries from Virginia,
New District Associations, Instruction of the Colored
Population, "The Test," Schools, Publications*

1831 - 1860

DESPITE the controversies, dissensions and divisions in the thirties there was increasing interest in the General Association as the agency for missionary work in Virginia. At its meeting in 1831 fifty-two delegates were present by appointment by five district associations,¹ twelve churches, twenty-two missionary societies, four life members, four individuals and one group. Contributions of \$1,228.33 for missionary work in Virginia were reported. Valentine M. Mason (1783-1843) of Lexington was appointed as the first full time "General Agent" at an annual salary of \$500. With the minutes were listed the names and addresses of two hundred ordained ministers and seventeen licentiates living in Virginia, and sketches of the state of religion in the ten associations to which the churches represented by delegates belonged.² The summary stated:

In most places where there have been Temperance, Tract, Sunday School, Colonization and Bible Societies; where religious papers have been read, and where prayer meetings have been kept up, there has the church increased, there have sinners been converted. Ministers, who promote among their people the great plans of Christian benevolence, increase their usefulness in the ministry.

1. These were the Albemarle, Dover, Greenbrier, Portsmouth, and Strawberry.

2. They were the Albemarle, Appomattox, Columbia, Dover, Goshen, Greenbrier, Ketocton, Middle District, Portsmouth, and Strawberry.

In 1835 The Baptist Union in England sent F. A. Cox and J. Hoby as a fraternal deputation to the Baptists in the United States and Canada. On landing in New York they proceeded at once to Richmond for the meeting of the General Association and the concurrent meetings of the Missionary and Education societies in April. After business sessions had occupied a morning "the members of the Education Society, the delegates of the General Association and a large concourse of ladies and gentlemen rode to the premises of the Seminary, prettily enclosed in well-cultivated garden grounds. One of the students, J. L. Shuck, delivered an oration" and after Cox had addressed the students and the assembly Shuck presented him with "a bouquet of beautiful flowers from the garden."³

The visitors from England remained in Richmond to the Eighth Triennial Convention which met there a few days later. It was more largely attended than any previous meeting of the body. There were delegates from nineteen states and the District of Columbia. Spencer H. Cone, pastor in New York, formerly in Alexandria who had succeeded to the presidency in 1832 on Semple's death, was re-elected. Ministers of all evangelical denominations present were invited to seats in the Convention, as they had been asked to participate in the meetings of the General Association and the societies, and William S. Plumer, pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Richmond, took part in their proceedings. The most important action of the Convention was the adoption of a resolution proposed by the Youth's Missionary Society of the Second Baptist Church of Richmond, of which James B. Taylor was pastor. This called for "far more enlarged and vigorous effort for the conversion of the Whole World" and the raising of at least one hundred thousand dollars during the following year for sending the Gospel to the heathen. This was double the amount contributed during the year preceding.

3. Cox and Hoby, *The Baptists in America*, 39.

In the final chapter of the account of their visit to America, in which they summarized their impressions of the Baptists in the different states, Cox and Hoby said:

The churches of Virginia are numerous, opulent and prosperous. With much, very much that must be deeply deplored as incident to a slave state (a term which we devoutly hope and frankly believe will not be applicable a few years hence), there are cheering manifestations of a fervent and well-principled religion. Their congregations are often large, particularly in Richmond; their regard to the services of christian worship devoted; their affection to each other fraternal; their spirit generous; and their conduct to the stranger frank, hospitable and welcoming. It is to be regretted that the proportion of ministers to churches is small. Some have to officiate in two, three and sometimes four places; but they are aware of the evil and will gradually remedy it. The ministry, as a whole, is deficient in education. The Virginia Baptist Seminary is, however, a great element of improvement in this respect, and the advocates of education and of missions are multiplying every day while their opponents, with their pseudo-Calvinism, are rapidly diminishing. Some of the churches have been affected with the anti-effort spirit, and with the anti-missionary and anti-union views of the Cambellite Baptists, but the denomination is advancing in intelligence and in exertion. The style of preaching is plain and energetic, less instructive, perhaps, than impassioned. In their public exercises, the "live coal from the altar" seems to glow upon their tongues; and in their private intercourse, "the law of kindness is in their hearts." The operations of the General Association are extensive, and the aid afforded to home and itinerant efforts is cordial and generous. Recent communications since we left, bespeak a growing prosperity. Their two annual camp meetings, which are peculiar to this portion of the denomination, appear to be conducted with the utmost decorum, and to be productive of beneficial results.⁴

Camp meetings were held in Halifax under the direction of A. W. Clopton, in the lower Northern Neck by J. B. Jeter, and by William F. Broaddus in Culpeper.

4. *Baptists in America*, 456.

At the meeting of the General Association in 1841 there were 151 present from fourteen district associations,⁵ sixty-two churches, four missionary societies and thirty-six life members. Because of ill-health Mason had resigned as General Agent and had been succeeded by Eli Ball, pastor of Bruington. Contributions were \$4,544.96⁶ despite "the derangement of the currency and restricted commerce." The Board had in its employ twelve missionaries below the Blue Ridge, two in the Valley and ten in Western Virginia. In his report Ball estimated that of the thirty associations, embracing in Virginia more than 500 churches and 60,000 members, nineteen associations with more than 390 churches and 53,850 members were favorable to the objects and plans of the General Association. "The remainder, either from the want of light or from some other cause, do not cooperate with us in our plans of benevolence."

By the consent of the Appomattox Association, Angola, Buckingham, Chestnut Grove, Cumberland, Mulberry Grove and Mount Tabor withdrew from it and with Fork, Jerusalem and Willis formed the James River Association in 1832. Their combined membership was 2,272.⁷ Joseph Jenkins was elected moderator and Poindexter P. Smith, clerk. At its meeting in 1833 it resolved:

That this Association, highly appreciating and cordially approving the efforts now making by the General Association to spread the gospel in its purity through the State, affectionately recommend to the several churches comprising the same, to patronize and aid the General Association in its truly benevolent and laudable exertions.

That the objects of the Virginia Baptist Education Society are cordially approved by this Association, and, that the churches are affectionately advised to give them their countenance and support.

5. They were the Accomack, Albemarle, Appomattox, Broad Run, Concord, Dan River, Dover, Greenbrier, James River, Middle District, Parkersburg, Portsmouth, Salem Union, and Strawberry.

6. Over \$7,000 also was raised by the Education, Missionary, Bible and Sunday School Societies.

7. Sketches of the churches are in the Minutes of the James River for 1834.

The next year it adopted unanimously a resolution that a General Sunday School Union be formed by the Baptist denomination in the United States.

In 1835 nine churches were dismissed from the Union Association to form the Broad Run Association whose territory covered a fifth of the present State of West Virginia. At its meeting in 1836 it resolved "that this Association form itself into a missionary society, auxiliary to the General Association of Virginia."⁸

In 1838 Rector College at Pruntytown in Taylor County was chartered.⁹ It was the child of the Western Virginia Education Society, organized by Joshua Bradley,¹⁰ who had recently come from New England. Charles Wheeler (1784-1850), a graduate of Brown University, was its president from 1840 until his death. The college did not survive the destruction of its buildings and valuable library by fire in 1855.¹¹

Beginning in 1836 the Virginia Baptist Education Society and the Virginia Foreign Missionary Society held their annual meetings at the same time and place as the General Association. So did the Virginia and Foreign Baptist Bible Society, newly organized "at sunrise" during the meeting of the General Association that year.¹² Their minutes were henceforth printed with the Proceedings of the General Association.

In 1837 the Virginia Baptist Foreign Missionary Society and the Virginia Foreign Baptist Bible Society each received from

8. *West Virginia Jubilee*, 272.

9. Named for Enoch Rector, pastor of the Parkersburg church, who contributed \$4,000 toward its founding.

10. Bradley graduated from Rhode Island College in 1799. In 1852 he was living in Minnesota, having traveled in seventeen states and formed eight education societies. (*Religious Herald*, January 8, 1852.)

11. Donnelly, *West Virginia Baptist Efforts at Education*.

12. Its purpose was to aid in publishing Judson's translation of the Bible into Burmese and other versions in which the term, baptizo, and its cognates were translated by words meaning immerse or dip. This the American Bible Society had refused to do. It became auxiliary to the American and Foreign Baptist Bible Society. Alexander Fleet was president of the Virginia Society from its beginning for ten years. John Goodall (1780-1840) was General Agent from 1838 until his death.

the estate of Mrs. Lucy Ann Coleman a legacy of \$898, the largest gifts to statewide organizations up to that time.

To the group of organizations around the General Association was added in 1838 the Virginia Baptist Sunday School Association. James C. Jordan was its first president. At its next meeting it became the Virginia Baptist Sunday School and Tract Society. In 1840 it became auxiliary to the American Baptist Publication and Sunday School Society and changed its name to Virginia Baptist Sunday School and Publication Society.

The Seminary Becomes Richmond College

The catalogue of the Virginia Baptist Seminary for 1836 listed seventy-five students. William Chiles of Caroline, Elias Dodson of Halifax, A. Paul Repiton (1808-76) of James City and John O. Turpin (1810-84) of Henrico were the first to complete four full years. They were engaged already in the ministry. The Board of Managers of the Education Society "indulged the hope that their fervent piety, exemplary deportment and devoted and successful labors will increase public confidence in the Institution and encourage the Society in their efforts to instruct the rising ministry." Burnley's place as "third teacher" was filled by F. W. Berryman, who was followed successively by Richard A. Claybrook, Elias Dodson, Joseph S. Walthall and the brothers, James C. Clopton and Samuel C. Clopton (1816-47). I. G. Barker,¹³ succeeded Nelson as "second teacher" and on his early death was followed by Charles L. Cocke (1820-1901).¹⁴ In 1839 the ladies of the First Baptist Church of Richmond contributed \$1,000 for the beginning of a permanent endowment for the Seminary. To facilitate the

13. A native of Western Virginia, who had pursued his academical studies at Granville College, in Ohio, and theological studies at Newton.

14. The Cloptons, Cocke, and Walthall had been students in the Seminary. They were graduates of Columbian except James C. Clopton who was an alumnus of the College of William and Mary.

receiving of gifts and legacies, to increase the security of the tenure by which the property was held, "to elevate the character and augment the Institution" the Education Society appointed a committee to obtain from the Legislature of Virginia a charter for a college. This was granted on March 4, 1840, to thirty-seven gentlemen, designated by the Education Society, as "Trustees of Richmond College."¹⁵ Since it was not then the policy of the State to incorporate an institution of a religious nature the charter specified that nothing in it "should be construed as to authorize the establishment of a theological professorship in the said college." So the year of theological instruction had to be dropped. Manual labor, which had become optional, was discontinued. The course of study was reorganized into two years of "Academic" (preparatory) and two years of "Collegiate" (Freshman and Sophomore) literary work. These changes were not completed until 1843 when property and endowment were transferred by the Education Society to the Trustees of the College. Conditions of the transfer were that the Education Society reserved to itself the right to furnish the Trustees a list of not less than ten persons from which vacancies on its board should be filled and that the Trustees should admit to instruction free from all charges except for board, all ministers and candidates for the ministry of the Baptist denomination recommended by the Society."¹⁶ The corporation adopted a seal designed by Andrew Broaddus¹⁷

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15. They were George Alderson, L. W. Allen, Eli Ball, Edmond Broadus, William F. Broaddus, Lawson Burfoot, Henry L. Carter, John B. Clopton, Cumberland George, Addison Hall, Samuel Hardgrove, Thomas Huggens, Thomas Hume, Charles Hunton, J. B. Jeter, James C. Jordan, Henry Keeling, John D. McGill, Joseph Mosby, A. M. Poindexter, Richard Reins, William Sands, James Sizer, Albert Snead, Jesse Snead, William Southwood, James B. Taylor, Samuel Taylor, Archibald Thomas, James Thomas, Jr., Joseph B. Turner, Peter Winston, Daniel Witt, A. G. Wortham, Richard C. Wortham, Silas Wyatt, John B. Young. Sixteen had been members of the Board of Managers of the Seminary.
16. Report of the Board of Managers of Virginia Baptist Education Society, 1841. When the Society dissolved in 1855 it transferred to its successor, the Education Board (later Board of Missions and Education) of the General Association, "its claim on the Trustees of Richmond College."
17. Robert Ryland in *Religious Herald*, March 28, 1844.

which, with only the change of name to the University of Richmond, has been used ever since. The first catalogue of the College (1843) listed forty-three in the Academic and twenty-five in the Collegiate departments. It carried the statement:

As the Trustees are determined to avoid pecuniary embarrassment, they propose to conduct the College classes only so far as their resources may justify, taking care to have the students thoroughly taught as far as they shall go. It is not their purpose to confer degrees until they shall have afforded facilities for education equal to those of other chartered institutions. It is far better to proceed cautiously, to live within our means, and to rise gradually but surely, than by affecting a premature prosperity, to plunge the enterprise into the vortex of ruin.

In 1845 a Junior year was added to the curriculum and in 1848 Senior work was given. The faculty was composed of President Ryland, professor of Moral Science, Heath Jones Christian, for ten years professor of Ancient Languages.¹⁸ Thomas Bolling Robertson, professor of Mathematics, N. B. Webster, lecturer on Natural Science, and Joseph Michard, teacher of French. Bachelor of Arts degrees were first conferred in 1849. Their recipients were Poindexter Smith Henson (1831-1914) of Fluvanna and Josiah Ryland (1830-1903) of King and Queen.

To Foreign Fields

Interest in world wide missions was accentuated by the appointment to foreign fields by the Board of Managers of the General Convention of three young Virginia couples whose expenses the Virginia Foreign Missionary Society undertook to provide.

William Mylne (1801-64) came to Richmond from Scotland in early youth. He was a member of the Second Baptist Church and was a student in the Seminary in 1833 and 1834.¹⁹ The

18. Christian had succeeded George Frederick Holmes, long time professor at the University of Virginia.

19. *Religious Herald*, May 5, 1864.

Board of Managers of the Convention reported at its meeting in Richmond in June, 1835, Mylne's appointment "to go out to Liberia." While waiting for "the first favorable opportunity" to sail he made a tour of churches in the Dover Association to elicit their interest.²⁰ In June he was ordained²¹ and was married by his pastor, James B. Taylor, to Elizabeth H. Davis in Goochland County. Their "designation" as missionaries was held in Richmond at the Second Church. James B. Taylor, Robert Ryland, William S. Plummer (pastor of the Presbyterian Church) and Mylne addressed the large congregation.²² They sailed on July 7, accompanied by William G. Crocker of Massachusetts, a graduate of Newton, also appointed by the Board for the Liberian Mission, and after an "unusually pleasant as well as short" voyage of thirty-two days from New York²³ they reached Liberia. Within a month both had severe attacks of fever and Elizabeth Mylne died on September 16.²⁴ After his recovery, William Mylne preached regularly at Edina and Bassa Cove, superintended building a meeting house and a mission house, conducted an evening school for young people and began the preparation of a dictionary of the native (Bassa) language. But continued ill health necessitated his return in 1838²⁵ to Virginia, where he held pastorates in the Goshen Association until his death.

On September 7, 1835, the Managers of the Education Society approved²⁶ the departure from the Seminary at that time of Robert Dunlavy Davenport (1809-48) and Jehu Lewis Shuck (1812-63), students and "beneficiaries" of the Society,

20. *Religious Herald*, March 27, 1835.

21. *Religious Herald*, June 19, 1835.

22. *Religious Herald*, June 26, 1835.

23. Mylne in *Religious Herald*, October 9, 1835.

24. Mylne in *Religious Herald*, December 25, 1835.

25. *Report of American Baptist Board of Foreign Missions*, 1839, p. 13 and 1840, p. 15.

26. Although they "should have preferred retaining them until they had completed their course of study at the close of the session in December."

who had been received by the Board of the General Convention as missionaries to Siam and China. Davenport, a member of the First Church, was a printer in Richmond of six years experience. Shuck was from Greenbrier County and had been a pupil in John Spott's school in Lewisburg.²⁷ They were ordained on August 30, Luther Rice sitting on the council.²⁸ On September 18, each was married—Davenport to Mary Frances Greenhow Roper (1819-96), daughter of David Roper, first pastor of the Second Church, by James B. Taylor, and Shuck by Henry Keeling to Henrietta Hall (1817-44), a daughter of Addison Hall (1797-1871) of Lancaster County.²⁹ Both of the young women had been students at the Richmond Classical and English School, conducted by Henry and Jane C. Keeling. Two days later they were "solemnly set apart" in the First Church in Richmond and on September 22, they sailed from Boston. With Davenport went 2,500 reams of paper and a printing press to be used in printing tracts and the recent translations of the Bible in Siamese and in Chinese. On March 31, 1836, they arrived at Singapore where the two couples separated. The Davenports went on to their destination, Bangkok, capitol of Siam, where for nine years Robert served the mission as printer and preacher and Frances conducted a school for native girls, until his health necessitated their return to America in 1845. He taught in Alexandria, Louisiana. Following his death Frances came back to Virginia and after some years married S. S. Feudge. They made their home in Chicago and later, in Baltimore, where she wrote *Eastern Side* and *India*.

After six months in Singapore the Shucks settled in Macao where they stayed six years and then moved to Hongkong.

27. *West Virginia Jubilee*, 259. "There are in the Big Levels Church two young brethren (Dougherty and Shuck) who bid fare for the ministry, but who will stand in need of beneficence of the Education Society." (V. M. Mason in *Proceedings of General Association*, 1832, p. 11.)

28. *Religious Herald*, September 4, 1835.

29. *Religious Herald*, September 11, 1835. Dunnaway, *Addison Hall*, 42.

Henrietta conducted schools in both cities and wrote *Scenes in China*.³⁰ She was "The First American Female Missionary to China,"³¹ where she died in 1844.

The Southern Baptist Convention

The meeting of the Triennial Convention in Richmond in 1835 was its last harmonious session before the seeds of strife, sown by Abolition agitators, germinated and grew apace in the North. The subsequent meetings of the body were increasingly disturbed by the injection of discussions on the subject of slavery until the controversy reached a culmination at the meeting of the Convention in Philadelphia in April, 1844.³² After thorough discussion the Convention unanimously resolved:

That in cooperating together as members of this Convention in the work of Foreign Missions, we disclaim all sanctions, either expressed or implied, whether of slavery or of anti-slavery, but as individuals we are perfectly free, both to express and to promote our own views on these subjects in a Christian manner and spirit.³³

The constitution of the Convention from its beginning prescribed:

That such persons as are in full communion with some regular church of our denomination and who furnish satisfactory evidence of genuine piety, good talents and fervent zeal for the Redeemer's Cause are to be employed as missionaries.

The resolution of the Convention was a mandate to the Board to continue this policy.³⁴ But in response to a question from the Alabama State Convention the Acting Board³⁵ replied in December, 1844:

30. Published posthumously.

31. Jeter, *Memoirs of Mrs. Henrietta Hall Shuck*.

32. Jeter, *Recollections*, 187.

33. *Baptist Memorial*, 1844, III, 185.

34. Vedder, 346.

35. On the Acting Board of fifteen rested all transactions between the annual meetings of the full Board of more than sixty.

If anyone should offer himself as a missionary, having slaves and should insist on retaining them as his property, we could not appoint him.³⁶

The whole Board at its next annual meeting acknowledged the constitutional eligibility of slave holders to all appointments but did not require the Acting Board to rescind its statement.³⁷

At its meeting in April, 1845, the American Baptist Home Mission Society, which faced the same question, declared it expedient that the members now forming the Society should hereafter act in separate organizations at the South and at the North in promoting the objects which were originally contemplated by the Society.³⁸

These actions rendered the maintenance of nation-wide cooperation impossible.³⁹

The Board of Managers of the Virginia Baptist Foreign Missionary Society issued a call for "a Convention to confer on the best means of promoting the Foreign Mission Cause and other interests of the Baptists in the South." On May 8, 1845, thirty-one delegates from twenty-six churches and two district associations in Virginia met at Augusta, Georgia, with delegates from seven other states and organized the Southern Baptist Convention. The constitution adopted was modelled after that of the Triennial Convention, except that, instead of auxiliary societies, boards were set up through which the Convention would carry on its activities—that for Foreign Missions at Richmond and another for Domestic Missions at Marion, Alabama. The Richmond Board elected J. B. Jeter, president; Cumberland George, vice-president; Archibald Thomas, treasurer; and James B. Taylor, corresponding secretary, a position which he filled until his death in 1871. Other Managers were Eli Ball, W. A. Baynham, Alexander Fleet, William H. Gwath-

36. *Baptist Memorial*, 1845, IV, 156-8.

37. *Minutes of the Virginia Baptist Foreign Missionary Society*, 1845, p. 26.

38. Vedder, 347.

39. The Methodist Episcopal Church had divided on a similar issue in 1844 and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South was organized in 1845.

mev, Thomas Hume, W. H. Jordan, E. L. Magoon, Robert Ryland, A. B. Smith, Albert Snead, Jesse Snead, M. T. Sumner, T. W. Sydnor, James Thomas, Junior, A. G. Wortham and C. T. Wortham.

In September, 1845, the Foreign Mission Board made its first missionary appointment—that of Samuel Cornelius Clopton,⁴⁰ followed in November by that of George Percy (1813-71).⁴¹ Both had attended the Virginia Baptist Seminary. Both had graduated from Columbian and Clopton had been a student at Newton. Clopton was married in April, 1846, to Keziah, daughter of Miles Turpin (1775-1833),⁴² and Percy in May to Frances Patrick Miller of Pittsylvania County. At the meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in Richmond in June, 1846, they were set apart for work in China. In October they reached Canton where Clopton died in July, 1847. His widow and infant son⁴³ returned to this country. The Pearcys' ill health forced them to do so in 1855.

Shuck came home on a visit in 1846, bringing his motherless children. He was accompanied by Yong Seen-Sang (1813-82),⁴⁴ a native preacher of ability, who was adopted by the Female Missionary Society of the First Baptist Church of Richmond. Shuck and Yong canvassed the South for a chapel in China and were cordially received by the Convention at its meeting in Richmond. Shuck and Yong were accepted by the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention and in March, 1847, they sailed from Boston for Shanghai. With them went Thomas William Tobey (1819-85), a licentiate of Lebanon Church in Lancaster County, a graduate of Columbian, and his bride of three months, Isabella, third daughter

40. Son of James (1782-1850) and grandson of William Clopton (1761-1816), pastors in succession of Emmaus in New Kent County.

41. Of Bedford County.

42. Pastor of Four Mile Creek in Henrico County.

43. Samuel C. Clopton (1847-1904) was pastor in Richmond, Baltimore and Smithfield, Virginia.

44. "Seen-Sang" was a title of respect.

of Addison Hall and sister of Henrietta Shuck. Her sickness compelled them to return in 1850. Tobey became pastor at Yanceyville, North Carolina, where Isabella died in 1857.

In 1846 the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention took over from the American Baptist Missionary Union two colored Virginia born missionaries in Liberia. Alexander L. Jones, a native of Richmond, died before notice of his appointment could reach him. John Day (1797-1854), born at Hicksford, had been in Africa since 1830 and held the offices of Chief Justice and of Lieutenant Governor of the Colony. He gave the rest of his life to the Mission and its schools.⁴⁵

The first unmarried woman appointed by the Board was Harriet A. Baker of Powhatan County, who sailed in 1850 for China and established a girls' boarding school in Shanghai. She was forced by ill health to return in 1853.

Richard Henry Stone (1832-1915) of Culpeper County was married in October, 1858, to Susan Gaines Broadus of the same county. In November they embarked on a voyage of three months to Africa as missionaries of the Southern Board in the Yoruba Country. His health failing, they returned in 1862. He served as chaplain in the Confederate Army and in 1867 went back to Lagos. His health again failing, he returned to Virginia and engaged in educational work in Culpeper County.

Kate Lowther of Clarksburg was married in 1859 to John Griffith Schilling. He had been accepted by the Board for the mission work in Canton where they arrived in 1860 and where she died in 1864.

The meeting of the General Association in 1845 was attended by 109 delegates from ten associations, fifty-six churches and four missionary societies. The Board reported eleven whole-time and seven part-time missionaries. Jesse Witt was engaged as

45. Tupper, *Foreign Missions of the Southern Baptist Convention*, 293-304.

General Agent. Contributions were \$2,969.31. The table of statistics appended to the Proceedings lists 486 churches in 23 associations, with 264 ministers and 77,001 members in affiliation with the General Association and the Boards of the Southern Baptist Convention. There were 123 "anti-mission" churches with 48 ministers and 6,657 members that did not affiliate.⁴⁶ Reporting to the Virginia Baptist Sunday School and Publication Society were 73 schools with 5,415 pupils, 1,228 officers and teachers and 9,497 volumes in their libraries.⁴⁷

The Goshen, which was counted among the associations supporting missions through state and southwide agencies had decided in 1844 to carry on its own missionary operations independently, but "in perfect harmony"⁴⁸ with the larger organizations. This it did until the disruption of the War in the sixties. Contributions from the churches of \$430 the first year climbed to \$6,600 in 1860. The Association supported Asa B. Cabiness and his wife and James Landrum Holmes (1836-61) and his wife in China,⁴⁹ Selden Y. Tribble and his wife in Africa, J. Lewis Shuck as its missionary to the Chinese in California and native missionaries in the Indian territory. In Virginia it maintained a line of mission posts throughout the Valley, where churches were constituted and meeting houses

46. The Methodists in 1847 had in Virginia 156 church buildings, 298 local preachers and 59,660 members. There were 219 Presbyterian churches, 177 ministers and 16,639 members. The Episcopalians had 112 church buildings, 112 clergymen and 4,305 communicants. The population of Virginia in 1840 was 1,239,793, of whom 449,087 were bond and 49,852 were free colored persons. (Howison, II, 483-7, 506.)

47. "So far as heard from." "There are now nearly twice as many schools among our churches as there were ten years ago."

48. Minutes of the Goshen Association, 1855, p. 10.

49. Cabiness was from Nottoway County. He studied at Richmond College and Madison University where he graduated in 1849. He married Elvira Adkisson of Halifax County. They were in China from 1853 until they returned in 1859, expecting to go back. On account of the War the Board was unable to send them. He became secretary of the Baptist General Association of Kentucky. Holmes, born in Preston County, graduated from Columbian College and married Sallie Little of Martinsburg in 1858. That year they sailed for China where he was murdered by Tai-ping insurrectionists. Mrs. Holmes remained at her post in China until her retirement in 1891.

were built at Hebron, Capon Bridge, Staunton, Botetourt Springs, Marion, Abingdon and Bristol.

New District Associations

The Valley Association was organized in 1841 by seventeen churches, west of the Blue Ridge, dismissed by the Strawberry for that purpose. Absalom C. Dempsey (1787-1872) and Cornelius Tyree (1814-91) were its first moderator and clerk.

Because of the extent of the territory of the Dover the Rappahannock Association was formed from it in 1843.⁵⁰ It embraced thirty-five churches between the Potomac and the Mattaponi rivers and contained 6,313 white and 8,682 colored members.⁵¹ Addison Hall was moderator from the beginning for twenty-four years and Littlebury W. Allen (1803-72) was its first clerk. In 1847 the Association appointed a committee "charged with the duty of enquiring into the early history of all the Baptist churches within the bounds of the Association." This was carried out by John T. McGill,⁵² who compiled and edited *Sketches of History of the Baptist Churches Within the Limits of the Rappahannock Association in Virginia*, published in 1850.

In response to a call by the General Association, for the formation of an auxiliary missionary body in Western Virginia, delegates from seven district associations⁵³ and eleven churches met at Lewisburg in 1843 and organized the Western Virginia Baptist Association, to promote a more lively interest in the plans of the General Association by the churches west of the

50. Not to be confused with the anti-mission body with the same name.

51. Left in the Dover were 39 churches with 4,384 white and 8,142 colored members.

52. McGill (1806-55), a practicing attorney in Middlesex, was a delegate from Hermitage and in 1849, clerk of the Association. He moved in 1850, with a large group from his neighborhood, to Kentucky, near Covington, where he became chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Western Baptist Theological Seminary. (*Religious Herald*, February 7, 1856.)

53. They were the Albemarle, Broad Run, Greenbrier, Strawberry, Teay's Valley, Union, and Valley.

Blue Ridge, which were remote from the places where the General Association usually met. Joseph Alderson was elected moderator and Cornelius Tyree, clerk. They were succeeded in 1845 by Matthew Ellison, moderator and Noah Baldwin (1817-1903), clerk. James Remley was treasurer. At its meeting in 1860 there were delegates from nine district associations, from thirty-four churches and from a female missionary society. Three representatives came from the General Association to which the Western Virginia Association always sent delegates. Colin Bass was moderator and William C. Parks, clerk. There were ten whole-time and ten part-time missionaries in its bounds, recommended by its executive committee and commissioned by the General Association.

When a majority of the Washington Association in 1845 refused to admit to its membership the church at Marion, solely because the church favored missionary operations, the representatives from the churches that believed in missions withdrew. Delegates from eleven churches in Russell, Scott, Smyth and Washington counties met at Castle's Woods in 1846 and organized the Lebanon Association. Its constitution read:

This Association shall at no time make a test of fellowship on either missionary or anti-missionary sentiments, but every church shall be permitted to aid or refuse to aid the benevolent institutions of the day.

David Jesse was moderator and Noah C. Baldwin, clerk. In 1849 there were fifteen churches with 713 members. In 1860 the Association numbered twenty churches with 1,183 white and 87 colored members.

The Judson District Association was organized at Bethesda in Marion County in 1847 with ten churches. Anthony J. Garrett was moderator and Austin Merrill, clerk.⁵⁴

In 1848, four churches in Virginia (three in Grayson County and one in Smyth) with two in Ashe County, North Carolina, having a total membership of 313, formed the Jeffer-

54 *West Virginia Jubilee*, 292:

son Association. B. Jacks was chairman and S. F. Anderson, secretary. It was in sympathy with missionary bodies.

The Zion Association was formed in 1848 by churches in Wayne County. Nine years later it contained six churches with 392 members.⁵⁵

The success of the Western Virginia Association led in 1850 to the organization at Clarksburg of the North Western Virginia Association. Its constitution stated that its object was: "to aid the General Association of Virginia in preaching the Gospel to feeble churches and destitute settlements in North Western Virginia." Its territory included the twenty-three counties covered by the Broad Run, Judson, Parkersburg and Union Associations, which cooperated. Contributions were forwarded to the Board in Richmond, which paid the salaries of the missionaries who were appointed and directed by the North Western Association.⁵⁶

The Washington ("Primitive") Association in 1851 approved the petition of nine churches with 300 members in Lee, Russell and Scott for dismissal to form the "Regular Primitive Baptist Stony Creek Association."

Delegates from thirteen churches with a total membership of 408, dismissed from the Broad Run Association, met in 1854 at Mt. Pisgah in Gilmer County and formed the Mt. Pisgah Association. J. S. Griffin was moderator and John Woolfer, secretary.⁵⁷

The Lebanon Association dismissed the Nickelsville,⁵⁸ Pleasant Grove, Point Truth and Red Hill churches to unite with other churches in Lee, Scott and Washington to form in 1856 the Clinch Valley Association.⁵⁹

55. Minutes of General Association, 1857, p. 89.

56. Minutes of General Association, 1851, p. 18.

57. *West Virginia Jubilee*, 306.

58. Called "Copper Creek" from its organization in 1807 until its name was changed in 1855.

59. Minutes of Lebanon Association, 1855.

In 1856 the Columbia Association with its nineteen churches, 1,469 white and 663 colored members and the Salem Union with twenty churches, 1,138 white and 725 colored members, occupying overlapping territory in Northern Virginia and alike in faith and practice, united to form the Potomac. William F. Broaddus was moderator and John Pickett, clerk.

Churches in Floyd, Franklin, Henry and Patrick (seven from the Strawberry and two newly constituted), with a total of 466 members, formed in 1858 the Blue Ridge Association. Daniel G. Taylor (1821-90) was moderator and William Hankins (1807-77), clerk—each for eighteen years.

With the exception of Stony Creek all these newly formed associations affiliated with the General Association.

Religious Instruction of the Colored People

From their beginnings the Baptists in Virginia preached to both races, baptized them on the same personal confession of faith, gathered them into the same churches and around the same table of the Lord,⁶⁰ and exercised care over their spiritual and moral development. "Colored deacons" were chosen to look after the colored members and recommend to the business meetings of the churches disciplinary action when needed.⁶¹ Negroes were licensed to "exercise their gifts" in public exhortation. The churches accepted for membership, not only the servants whose owners were members but also, those belonging to persons of other denominations in the community, if they brought written permissions and recommendations from their masters.⁶²

The first separate statistics for white and colored members of the churches are in the minutes of the Dover Association for 1838. A majority of its fifty-seven churches reported a

60. Minutes of the Rappahannock Association, 1860, p. 21.

61. The government of each church was by its white male members.

62. A number of these permits are in the Virginia Baptist Historical Society.

larger number of colored than white members.⁶³ The total membership of all its churches was 5,755 white and 9,112 colored. When their figures were given in their minutes a few years later the Albemarle, Concord, Dan River, Dover, Goshen,⁶⁴ James River, Middle District, Portsmouth and Rapahannock showed like preponderances.

The religious instruction and training of these colored church members was made more difficult after the insurrection led by Nat Turner in Southampton County in 1831. Laws were passed by the State restricting the assembling of Negroes, forbidding them to preach and requiring the pastors of their churches and representatives to the associations to be white men. Because incendiary "Abolition" propaganda was coming into Virginia it was made a crime to teach Negroes to read.⁶⁵

The Appomattox Association called attention in 1832 to the lack of room for the colored people in the meeting houses, resulting "in multitudes of immortal beings entirely excluded from them and deprived of these means of religious instruction because they were born with a black or yellow skin or in a state of bondage."

In 1834 the Dover recommended to the pastors and members of its churches "adopting in conformity with the provision of the laws a systematic course of oral religious instruction for the benefit of colored persons."

Beginning with the Albemarle and the Dover in 1841, most of the district associations, through the reports of standing committees on "The Religious Instruction of the Colored Population," showed their concern and stirred up the churches to the discharge of the duty which devolved "almost exclusively" upon them. The Albemarle "committee to consider the best

63. In Gloucester, Ebenezer had 41 white and 792 colored members and Petsworth, 16 white and 246 colored.

64. Licking Hole (Smyrna) in Goochland and reported to the Gsohen 198 white and 700 colored members.

65. This was construed as applying to organized classes, not to gratuitous instruction of individuals. (*Religious Herald*, January 15, 1846.)

means of promoting the moral and religious improvement of our slaves and especially of our colored members” reported:

That there seems to be three principal faults in our treatment of our colored members:

1. We admit them too loosely and carelessly into the church, considering their general ignorance and the wild and crude notions which they may be expected to entertain of Divine things.

2. We do not watch over, admonish and encourage them as carefully and assiduously as their condition demands.

3. We do not impart to them adequate religious instruction.

To remedy these evils we would recommend:

1. That each church select a Committee of five or seven of its most pious and intelligent colored members to hear and examine all colored applicants for membership and if approved to recommend them to the church, and that the pastor be requested to meet frequently with this Committee to instruct them in the important duties they have to perform.

2. That the Church itself be very particular in the examination of such applicants upon all the vital points of the Christian religion.

3. That the Committee be likewise requested to overlook, reprove, encourage and instruct their colored brethren as far as they can and report their condition from time to time.

4. That in all churches, where such accommodation does not exist, suitable provision be made for the accommodation of the colored people during public worship.

5. That a committee of three white members, under the supervision of the pastor, be appointed to take charge of the religious instruction of the blacks: to meet them for this purpose every Sabbath or every alternate Sabbath, and, with the usual exercises of singing and praying, read to them the Scriptures, particularly the narrative and hortatory parts, giving familiar explanations and asking simple questions on the preceding lesson. That this committee enquire of the colored committee from time to time concerning the spiritual conditions of their associates and that they be earnestly recommended to make themselves *personally* acquainted with the religious wants of their charge, that they may modify their instruction accordingly.

6. That the pastor be requested to preach to the colored people, *specially*, at least once in every two months.

7. That every head of a family be recommended to give his servants religious instruction at least once a week by reading and explaining to them the Scriptures and other *suitable matter*, and that to provide such matter Brother Sands be requested to open a department in the *Religious Herald*, especially for servants.

Similar reports to most of the associations for the next score of years urged the attendance of household servants on daily prayers, discussed the difficulties to be surmounted in assemblies for oral instruction, recommended to the churches "to so construct or remodel our places of worship as to enable our colored people to attend the services with comfort and convenience,"⁶⁶ approved the use of the *Scripture Catechism for the Instruction of Children and Servants* by Robert Ryland and requested the churches "to supply the colored population, so far as they can read, with the Word of God."⁶⁷ The Board of the Virginia and Foreign Baptist Bible Society in 1849, "not unmindful of the colored population," directed its depositaries in Portsmouth and Richmond to furnish them with the New Testament and Psalms, "gratuitously as a general thing, though many of the colored people seem highly gratified at being permitted to pay (10 cents) for them."

Another form of better care for its colored members was adopted by the First Church of Richmond under the guidance of its pastor, J. B. Jeter, when in 1841 it moved into a new meeting house and sold the vacated building⁶⁸ to the newly organized First African Baptist Church of about 940 members. It made a successful effort to raise \$3,500 and citizens of Richmond contributed \$2,750 towards the total payment of \$6,250, "a generous relinquishment of a part of the appraised value." The government of the Church, "more presbyterial than congregational," was vested in the pastor and thirty deacons chosen

66. Minutes, Roanoke Association, 1849, p. 10.

67. Minutes, Rappahannock Association, 1848, p. 15.

68. The building stood on the corner of Broad and 14th streets, the site of the present house of worship.

by the Church. Appeal from their decision could be made to a committee of twenty-four white supervisors appointed from the First, Second and Third (Grace Street) Churches. Robert Ryland, in addition to his duties as president of Richmond College, became its pastor and served until 1865.⁶⁹

The success of the experiment made it a model for others.⁷⁰ The "Third Colored Church in Petersburg" was received by the Portsmouth Association in 1843. In 1846 "Manchester African"⁷¹ and "Midlothian African" in Chesterfield were admitted by the Middle District, and an African Church in Lynchburg, under the care of James C. Clopton, its pastor for seventeen years, was listed by the Strawberry Association. "The Second African of Richmond" was received by the Dover in 1846. The Valley Association admitted "Fincastle African" in 1849 and "Mill Creek African" in 1855, both in Botetourt County and both under the care of Absalom C. Dempsey, pastor of the mother churches. In 1851 it received the "African Church at Zion's Hill" as a branch of Zion's Hill. African churches were organized in Alexandria in 1855 and in Fredericksburg in 1856.⁷² In 1858 the Dover received the "Third African of Richmond" (Ebenezer). In 1859 it received the "Fourth African of Richmond" and the "Chickahominy Colored Church" in James City County and the Shiloh re-

69. Reminiscences of the First African Baptist Church, Richmond, Va., by the pastor, in *The American Baptist Memorial*, XIX. Origin and History of the First African Church by Robert Ryland, in *The First Century of the First Baptist Church of Richmond, Virginia*.

70. A few independent colored churches had existed from early dates. The Dover Association had admitted a church "of people of color" in Williamsburg in 1791 and Elam in 1813. Gillfield had been a member of the Portsmouth Association since 1810 and the "African Church in Petersburg" (Harrison Street) since 1828. The withdrawal in 1818 of its white members to form Cumberland Street (now called "First") left the First Church of Norfolk (organized in 1804) to its colored membership. In 1840 this had divided and each (Bute Street and Bank Street) claimed to be the First Baptist Church.

71. "The African Church in Manchester" is included in the Middle District Minutes for 1843 with Spring Creek (Bethlehem). The combined membership was 130 white and "about 700 colored."

72. Minutes of Potomac Association, 1856, p. 13.

ceived the "African Church at Culpeper Courthouse." In 1861 colored members of the Charlottesville Church numbering 842 were organized as "Charlottesville African" under the care of J. P. Randolph, a licentiate of the mother church, whose pastor, Abram B. Brown (1821-85), also preached for them once a month and administered the Lord's Supper.⁷³

Total Abstinence and "The Test"

Temperance Societies within their bounds had been reported in the letters to their associations by many churches since Clopton launched the Virginia Society for the Promotion of Temperance in 1826.⁷⁴ The rising tide of total abstinence, fostered by the Sons of Temperance and the societies affiliated with the American Temperance Union, was reflected in the reports of the standing committees on Temperance of the district associations and their advice to the churches. These began in 1840 when the Committee of the Dover urged "that every church see to it that she is purified from the pollution of intemperance by the exercise of a wholesome, efficient discipline," and "affectionately recommended that the churches abstain altogether from the use of ardent spirits."

The same year the Portsmouth Association advised its churches "on receiving members into their fellowship to admonish them to abandon the use of all intoxicating drinks as beverages."

The address by William F. Broaddus on the dangers of drink, delivered at the session of the Shiloh in 1840, was printed in its minutes and the Circular Letter in 1842 was on "Abstaining entirely, in a state of health, from the use of intoxicating drinks."

73. *Religious Herald*, June 20, 1861.

74. Fifteen of the twenty-two churches in the Appomattox Association in 1831 reported Temperance Societies within their bounds and in 1834 of the fifty-two churches in the Dover, twenty-one listed Temperance Societies. Moratico Church stated that "nearly every member is pledged to abstain from the use of ardent spirits."

In 1841 the Albemarle and the James River declared that traffic in ardent spirits was not consistent with Christian character and that the dealer who persisted, "after being affectionately admonished," should be dealt with strictly.

During the next twenty years most of the associations adopted annually recommendations to the churches presenting the dangers of moderate drinking and urging the adoption of total abstinence from all intoxicating liquors (except as medicine) by all of their members. The associations approved membership in the Sons of Temperance. In 1846 the Dover appointed a committee to memorialize the Legislature of Virginia to submit the granting of licences in each county to the voters of that county. In 1853 the Salem Union advocated the passage by the Legislature of an act prohibiting the manufacture and sale of spirituous liquors—a question "extensively agitated" in Virginia at that time.

A consequence of the emphasis on the evils of alcoholic beverages and the impropriety of indulgence in them by church members was the advanced, and to its opponents, "extreme," position that churches should not retain in their membership "persons who use intoxicating liquors for other than medicinal or mechanical purposes."

On this "Test," as it came to be called, opinion was divided. The Goshen Association, while urging the importance of putting down the practice of moderate drinking, did not think the Test to be the scriptural means of accomplishing it.⁷⁵ But considerable numbers in some of the churches believed it should be required for fellowship. In 1846 those members of Salem in Caroline who favored the Test withdrew and organized Mt. Calvary. Within a year it had dedicated a meeting house and called Andrew Broaddus, Jr., to its pastorate. In 1849 Mt. Calvary reported 174 white and 28 colored members. Two flourishing Temperance societies were connected with it—"one

75. Goshen Minutes, 1857.

for the whites of between three and four hundred members, the other for the colored of more than a hundred."⁷⁶ In 1847 the Test minorities from Mine Run and Liberty withdrew and organized Hebron and Bethesda.

Delegates from Hebron, Zoan, Flat Run and a part of Massaponax in the Goshen, and from Hanover in the Rappahannock,⁷⁷ met in convention in 1857 and organized the Hebron Baptist Association. The 6th Article of Faith adopted was, "The use of intoxicating liquors, as a beverage, is positively interdicted." William R. Powell (1808-59) was elected moderator, A. J. Gordon, clerk and John A. Gordon, treasurer. Powell founded in 1858 the *Virginia Baptist*, organ of the Test movement, and was followed by John C. Willis (1824-94) as its editor and published in Fredericksburg. James Powell (1801-70), Joseph Billingsley (1817-93) and E. P. Hawkins were successively moderators of the Association.

Ten years later the Hebron Association dissolved and in response to the Goshen's invitation Flat Run, Hebron and Rechab, "carrying their Test with them," were received by it "with much good feeling."⁷⁸

Statistics

The statistics gathered by John S. Reynoldson (1812-54) in 1850 showed 77,350 Baptists east of the Blue Ridge, 3,679 in the Valley and 8,776 in Western Virginia, making a total of 89,805, almost equally white and colored.⁷⁹

76. In 1856 a number of the members of Mt. Calvary moved to the Far West. The remainder dissolved their constitution and joined Salem which moved to Mt. Calvary's more commodious meeting house at Sparta.

77. When Hanover left the Rappahannock its "anti-Test" minority was admitted to the Rappahannock as Shiloh.

78. Goshen Minutes, 1867. Not until 1891 was Hanover readmitted to the Rappahannock on its invitation.

79. *Religious Herald*, January 26, 1854. By commission of the General Association in 1851 Reynoldson prepared a map showing the location, the pastor and the number of members of every Baptist church in Virginia. It is now in the Virginia Baptist Historical Society. He was drowned in the sinking of the *City of Glasgow* on his return from a visit to his birthplace in England.

Columbian and Richmond Colleges

The continued interest of Virginia Baptists in Columbian College was shown by the large proportion of its graduates annually from this State, the success of Abram M. Poindexter (1809-72) in raising in Virginia in three years (1846-1848) more than \$25,000 for its endowment, to meet the conditional offer of \$10,000 by John Withers of Alexandria, and the securing by William F. Broadus in 1853 of \$20,000 to meet the offer by Withers of a like amount.

In 1851 Poindexter began a financial agency for Richmond College that added \$85,000 to its endowment.⁸⁰ In 1854 the north wing of the projected College building was erected. By 1860 the endowment had reached \$100,000 and the faculty consisted of six professors⁸¹ and a tutor. There was an adequate library, a collection of scientific apparatus and a student body of 114. The cost of tuition, room and board was \$187.50 for the year.

The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

After discussion for ten years by the Virginia Baptist Education Society of the need for theological instruction of ministers the report of the Board in 1854 suggested "the propriety of inquiring what can be done to promote theological education among our young ministers." A. M. Poindexter, J. B. Jeter and Basil Manly, Jr. (1825-92), the committee to which the matter was referred, reported the next year that during the intervening session of the Southern Baptist Convention they had called a conference of the friends of theological education at which

80. John A. Broadus, "Memorial of A. M. Poindexter," in *Sermons and Addresses*, 396, 400.

81. They were Robert Ryland, D.D., Moral Science; George E. Dabney, A. M., Latin; Lewis Turner, A.M., Mathematics and Astronomy; William G. Strange, A.B., Chemistry and Natural Philosophy; E. Adkins, A.M., Greek; William S. Chase, A.M., Modern Languages; A. H. Slocumb, A.B., tutor.

a meeting was appointed in Augusta, Georgia, in April, 1856. The General Association sent delegates to this meeting and to that at Louisville, Kentucky, held during the session of the Convention in 1857. It cordially approved the "proposition to found and endow a General Theological School at Greenville, South Carolina," heartily commended the object to the liberality of Virginia Baptists and appointed John A. Broadus (1827-95), T. G. Jones (1821-95), J. B. Jeter, Basil Manly, Jr., R. B. C. Howell and John L. Burrows (1814-93) to attend a convention at Greenville in 1858 "to consult in relation to the plan and organization of such an institution."⁸² The General Association in 1858 cordially approved the immediate establishment at Greenville of a Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and suggested to the churches that \$25,000 be raised in Virginia toward its endowment, and William F. Broaddus was appointed to canvass the State. In 1859 Virginia furnished two of the four professors—John A. Broadus and Basil Manly, Jr.—and ten⁸³ of the twenty-six matriculates—the largest number of any of the six states represented.

Schools for Young Women

When Joshua Bradley, canvassing for Rector College, learned that the property of Botetourt Springs in Roanoke County was for sale he organized the Valley Union Education Society which bought it and in 1843 opened the Botetourt Springs Male and Female Academy with Bradley as principal. He was succeeded in 1846 by Charles L. Cocke from the faculty of Richmond College, who continued to be president for his lifetime. In 1852 the school ceased to be coeducational and became the

82. Minutes of General Association, 1857.

83. They were Reuben B. Boatwright (1831-1913), W. C. Caspari, John W. Harrow, Hilary E. Hatcher (1832-92), John William Jones (1836-1909), Charles Hill Ryland (1836-1914), Thomas Benton Shepherd (1836-1906), William J. Shipman (1836-1915), Crawford Howell Toy (1836-1919), James D. Witt (1860).

Valley Union Seminary for Young Ladies—the first chartered school for young women in Virginia. In 1855, in appreciation of a gift of \$5,000 by John Hollins (1786-1859) of Lynchburg, its name was changed to Hollins Institute.⁸⁴

About 1850 Richmond Baptists became interested in establishing a school for young women in that city. James B. Taylor “on his own motion,” called a meeting of two representatives from each of the Richmond churches—Archibald Thomas and John A. Belvin from the First, Albert Snead and J. C. Courtney from the Second and Wellington Goddin and James B. Taylor from Grace Street. They called a general meeting which launched a stock company. In 1853 the Trustees of the Richmond Female Institute were incorporated. They acquired the property on the east side of Tenth Street between Marshall and Clay and erected a building⁸⁵ at a cost of \$60,000. Basil Manly, Jr., resigned the pastorate of the First Church of Richmond to be president of the Institute. It opened in 1854 and matriculated that year 191 students. In 1859 when Manly became a professor in the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary Charles H. Winston (1831-1918), a member of the faculty of the Institute, became its president.⁸⁶

In 1854 fifteen Baptists, most of them in the Hampton Roads area, were incorporated as Trustees of The Chesapeake Female College. Under the leadership of Martin R. Foley, a campus

84. Hollins' gift was inspired by the interest of his wife, Ann Halsey Hollins (1792-1864), a member of the First Baptist Church of Lynchburg, whose later gifts amounted to \$13,000, the largest amount up to that time given by an individual to education in Virginia. (C. L. Cocke in *Religious Herald*, January 28, 1864.) The indebtedness of the Trustees to Cocke for sums advanced by him to meet current deficits in operating costs had become so large that in 1900 the Board, in return for its notes, gave over the Institute to him as his private property. (Smith, *Cocke*, 158-85.) In 1932 it was deeded by his heirs to the “Trustees of the Hollins College Corporation.”

85. Designed by architect T. A. Teft of New York City.

86. The Institute was reorganized in 1893 as The Woman's College of Richmond, which in 1914-16 was absorbed into Westhampton College, coordinate with Richmond College in the University of Richmond. Its successive presidents were Basil Manly, Jr., 1854-9; Charles H. Winston, 1859-73; John Hart, 1873-8; Sally B. Hamner, 1878-91; James Nelson, 1892-1914. The site of the Institute is occupied by the Virginia Mechanics Institute.

of forty acres was acquired between Hampton and Old Point Comfort and a five story building erected by the sale of stock. The College opened with Foley president. When financial difficulties forced its sale it was bought in by a group of Norfolk and Portsmouth Baptists headed by Thomas Hume, Sr. (1812-75). It reopened in 1859 with Charles A. Raymond (1822-95) president and Isaac B. Lake (1832-1922) and Thomas Hume, Jr.,⁸⁷ professors. It was forced to close in 1861 when the Peninsula was occupied by the Federal army. General Benjamin F. Butler, the local commander, had the College property sold for taxes, bought it himself and subsequently sold it to the United States Government, which converted it into a Home for Disabled Union Soldiers.⁸⁸

The General Association in 1856 expressed its gratitude "to our brethren for their zeal and liberality in the establishment of the Female Institute at Richmond and Hollins Institute at Botetourt Springs, and in the incipient efforts for establishing the Chesapeake Female Institute and similar institutions."

The Albemarle Female Institute was opened in 1856. John Hart (1827-95) was principal, Alexander Pope Abell,⁸⁹ co-principal and Crawford H. Toy,⁹⁰ instructor. John A. Broadus was president of the Board of Trustees.⁹¹

"Many enterprising brethren" in 1859 established in Danville the Union Female College, "a school of high character," cordially approved by the Dan River and the Roanoke Associations. As Roanoke Female College and Averett College⁹² it has had a continuous career.

87. Later professor in the University of North Carolina.

88. Now Kecoughtan Veterans' Administration Facility.

89. Clerk of the Albemarle Association from 1841 until he moved from the State in 1873.

90. Toy was professor of Old Testament Interpretation in the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary from 1859 to 1879, when he became professor of Semitic Languages in Harvard University.

91. In 1897 it was called Rawlings Institute in appreciation of the gift to Virginia Baptists of three quarters of the stock by Richard H. Rawlings. Its plant now belongs to St. Anne's (Episcopal) School.

92. Named for Samuel W. and John T. Averett, for many years its principals.

Under the leadership of George Boardman Taylor (1832-1907), pastor in Staunton, the property of the Blue Sulphur Springs in Greenbrier County was acquired for \$44,000 by the Western Virginia Baptist Association and Alleghany High School was opened in 1859. Within a year it had been chartered as Alleghany College. William F. Duncan was president and in 1860 there were 130 matriculates. The outbreak of the War scattered faculty and students and in 1864 its principal building was burned while occupied by Federal forces. The court refused to approve the final payment of \$3,600 which had been made in Confederate currency and the property passed from Baptist ownership.⁹³

Academies

Among the number of notable private schools for boys, conducted during this period by educators who were Baptists, were Ellington in Hanover, by Thomas H. Fox (1794-1864);⁹⁴ Concord Academy in Caroline, by Frederick W. Coleman; Hanover Academy, whose principal, Lewis Minor Coleman (1827-63), in 1859 became professor of Latin at the University of Virginia; Locust Dale in Madison, founded by A. J. Gordon; Stevensville Academy in King & Queen, taught by Alfred Bagby (1828-1925) and Josiah Ryland; and John Spotts' School at Lewisburg in Greenbrier, from which J. L. Shuck and twenty other young men went into the ministry.⁹⁵

Periodicals

Henry Keeling, editor and proprietor, in 1842 began the publication of the *Virginia Baptist Preacher*, a monthly made up of original sermons and addresses by natives or residents of Virginia, and continued it for sixteen years.

93. Donnelly.

94. Goshen Association Minutes, 1867, p. 11.

95. *West Virginia Jubilee*, 259.

In 1847 *The Baptist Guardian*, a "Religious Family Newspaper," was launched in Richmond by J. L. Reynolds (1812-77), editor and Henry K. Ellyson (1823-90), publisher.⁹⁶ After a year it was absorbed by the *Religious Herald*.⁹⁷

From Fairmont in 1848 D. S. Morris issued the *Baptist Record*. In 1850 it became the *Mountain Messenger and Baptist Recorder*, located at Morgantown and edited by Simon Siegfried, which continued until 1859. In 1860 the *Northwestern Virginia Baptist*, edited by D. B. Purington, was started in Parkersburg but was discontinued because of the War.⁹⁸

In 1857 David Shaver (1820-1902), pastor in Hampton, became co-editor of the *Religious Herald* with William Sands who had been sole editor and publisher. Sands, Shaver and Company became its owners.

The Societies Become Boards

The delegates to the meetings of the General Association and the meetings of the six societies, held at the same time and place, were increasingly aware of the inconveniences of so many different lists of members, so many different treasurers to receive money and so many different organizations constituted almost entirely of the same men. A change in the constitution of the General Association enabled it in 1855 to set up Boards to which the Societies transferred their assets and obligations.⁹⁹ The treasurer of the General Association, Jesse F. Keese, ¹⁰⁰ received all the funds and distributed them to the treasurers of the several Boards of the General Association ac-

96. Reynolds was pastor and Ellyson a member of the Second Church of Richmond.

97. *Religious Herald*, October 12, 1848.

98. *West Virginia Jubilee*, 135.

99. The Virginia Baptist Education Society transferred to the Education Board of the General Association, as its legal successor, its right to furnish the Board of Trustees of Richmond College a list of persons from which vacancies on the Board should be filled.

100. Succeeded in 1857 by Thomas J. Starke.

ording to the designations of the donors. James B. Taylor was president and H. K. Ellyson was corresponding secretary of the State Mission Board, located in Richmond. Basil Manly, Jr., was president and William H. Gwathmey (1819-86) was corresponding secretary of the Sunday School and Publication Board, located in Richmond. R. B. C. Howell was president and Robert Ryland was corresponding secretary of the Education Board, located in Richmond. Thomas Hume was president and Tiberius Gracchus Jones was corresponding secretary of the Bible Board, located in Norfolk. John A. Broadus was president and B. W. Snead was corresponding secretary of the Foreign Mission Board, located in Charlottesville. John L. Pritchard was president and W. A. Miller was corresponding secretary of the Domestic Mission Board, located in Lynchburg.

Statistics

In 1857 the number of Missionary Baptists in Virginia was over one hundred thousand. The minutes of the General Association for that year carried the list of 26 affiliated district associations and 692 churches, pastored by 303 ordained ministers with 56 licentiates. There had been 6,957 additions by baptism during the previous year. Reports from 250 Sunday Schools gave totals of 2,594 officers and teachers, 13,027 pupils registered, an average attendance of 7,777 and 29,536 volumes in their libraries.¹⁰¹ Gifts for State Missions reached a high mark of \$11,510.56 and the Board employed 51 whole or part-time missionaries whose fields covered 73 counties and 46 towns and villages.

101. These were made up largely of publications of the American Tract Society in New York, the American Sunday School Union in Philadelphia, the American Baptist Publication Society in Philadelphia, and E. Thompson Baird in Richmond. The Sunday School offered to a large proportion of the children their only opportunity to learn to read. In 1852 more than a tenth of the white people in Virginia over 20 years old were illiterate. (General Association Minutes, 1852, p. 59.)

By authorization of the General Association its Sunday School and Publication Board engaged Alfred E. Dickinson (1830-1906) as General Superintendent of Colportage and Sunday Schools at a salary of \$1,000. The number of colporters increased in a year from eight to fifty and the distribution of Bibles and other books, by sale and gift, was prosecuted vigorously in the most destitute parts of the State.

In 1860 gifts for State Missions were \$15,180.18; for Foreign Missions, \$7,752.91; for Domestic Missions, \$5,272; for the Education Board, \$1,901.07;¹⁰² for the Bible Board, \$732.22¹⁰³ and for the Sunday School and Publication Board, \$10,945.01.

The material prosperity in the fifties found expression all over the State in the replacement of the earlier log and frame meeting houses by commodious and substantial brick buildings with galleries for the colored members.¹⁰⁴

102. For the education of young ministers.

103. For the printing and circulation of the Scriptures.

104. *Religious Herald*, January 1 and October 7, 1852; July 7, 1854.

Destruction and Rebuilding

1861 - 1869

FROM 1861 to 1865 Virginia suffered repeated invasions by Federal armies, which devastated the country, disrupted the churches that lay in their paths, scattered their members, damaged or destroyed many of their meeting houses, imprisoned eight of their ministers and executed a young preacher.

Meeting houses damaged or destroyed by Federal troops were those of Enon in Chesterfield; Bethlehem, Mount Pony and New Salem in Culpeper; Backlick ("Old School") and Jerusalem in Fairfax; Broad Run, Carter's Run, Grove and Mt. Holly in Fauquier; Antioch, Four Mile Creek and Pioneer in Henrico; James City in James City; Waterford in Loudoun; Mulberry in Nansemond; Liberty in New Kent; Old Shop in Prince George; Berea and Hartwood (both "Old School") in Stafford; High Hills in Sussex; Bethel, Grafton and Mt. Calvary in York and in the towns of Charles Town, Fredericksburg and Winchester.

Charles C. Bitting (1831-98), pastor of the Baptist Church in Alexandria, was imprisoned for two months because he would not take the oath of allegiance to the United States Government and was compelled to ride all day on the fender of the locomotive that ran from Alexandria to Orange Court House to prevent attacks on the train by Mosby's Men.¹

William F. Broaddus, pastor in Fredericksburg, was arrested in 1862 by Federal officers and carried to prison in Washington

1. *Virginia Baptist Ministers*, Fourth Series, 328.

as a hostage for Union men held as political prisoners in Richmond by the Confederate authorities.²

On May 9, 1864 Charles W. Dobbs (1840-1916), pastor of Court Street in Portsmouth, was imprisoned by order of the Federal General B. F. Butler.³

The Minute Book of Long Branch Church in Fauquier County records on October 15, 1864, that its pastor, George W. Harris, was "a prisoner."⁴

Jeremiah Hendren (1793-1864), pastor of Tanner's Creek, was one of the citizens of Norfolk who were arrested and imprisoned or placed under severe surveillance by the Federal Army when it occupied the city. His anxiety and suffering brought a rapid decline and early death.⁵

Richard Nutt Herndon (1809-66), pastor at Luray, on his refusal to take the oath of allegiance, was taken from a sick bed by the Federal authorities and sent to "a cold, damp prison" at Culpeper Court House, where he contracted rheumatic fever. He died the year after he was parolled.⁶

Federal troops gutted and destroyed the home of John M. Lamb (1821-1905), pastor of Mt. Pleasant in Charles City County and carried him off to a Northern prison where he was confined for twelve months.⁷

Meriwether Winston (1828-66) resigned the pastorate of the Sanson Street church in Philadelphia at the beginning of the War and returned to Virginia, his native state. He was taken in 1864 from his home in Hanover by Federal raiders and forced to go on foot through rain and sleet to Fortress Monroe, where for three months he was incarcerated in the military prison with felons from the Union forces. The exposure

2. Manuscript Diary.

3. Jones, *Portsmouth Association*, 137.

4. *Religious Herald*, July 25, 1867.

5. Jones, *Portsmouth Association*, 246.

6. *Virginia Baptist Ministers*, Third Series, 67.

7. *Religious Herald*, April 26, 1866.

and hardship caused the pulmonary disease which brought on his early death.⁸

Albert C. Willis, a licentiate of Crooked Run Church in Culpeper County, a young preacher of promise, who had been a colporter in the Shiloh Association, was a member of Mosby's Command when he was captured and by order of the Federal General, William H. Powell, was hanged in Rappahannock County in retaliation for the shooting of a Federal spy by Mosby's Men. The inscription on the stone at his grave in the Flint Hill Baptist Church yard is "A. C. Willis—Killed Oct. 14, 1864—Co. C. 43rd. Va. Battalion—Mosby's Command."⁹

Congregations were small, for the men and boys from sixteen to sixty were in the Confederate army and women and children fled before the advance of the enemy. The associations were scantily attended. Richmond College was closed for lack of students and the Richmond Female Institute was suspended when the city was invested by the Federal army. The buildings of both were converted into hospitals.

The Mission and Education Boards were unable to function and the organized activity of the General Association found expression through the Colportage Board. This was directed in 1861 to restrict its work altogether to the army, "a field entirely unoccupied," and to solicit special contributions for colportage among the soldiers from persons in all parts of the country. The next year the superintendent of colportage, A. E. Dickinson, reported to the General Association that such an appeal had been made "with the most remarkable success." Everywhere, from men of all denominations and of no denomination, there had been a liberal response and \$24,000 had been collected.¹⁰ Forty tracts totaling 6,187,000 pages had been printed and dis-

8. *Religious Herald*, August 25, 1864 and May 10, 1866. Jones, 284, Dover Minutes, 1866.

9. *Shiloh Minutes*, 1865, pp. 2, 8; 1866, p. 8; Williamson, *Mosby's Rangers*, 289.

10. More than half came from Virginia and the balance from ten other southern states.

tributed in camps and hospitals, besides 6,095 testaments, 13,845 copies of the little volume called "Hymns for the Camps" and a large number of religious books. In 1863 the Board stated that its collections for the year were \$60,027, with which eighty colporters and evangelists had been sustained, 24,000,000 pages of tracts printed and distributed, 25,000 Bibles and testaments put in circulation and thousands of copies of religious journals from the various southern states purchased and sent to the camps weekly.¹¹

The evangelists sent out by the Board held protracted meetings and, together with chaplains,¹² colporters and many pastors, released for weeks or months by their churches to minister to the spiritual needs of the soldiers from their own congregations and communities, promoted the notable revival of religion that in the winter of 1863-4 swept through the Army of Northern Virginia. In 1864 the Superintendent of Colportage reported to the General Association that during the previous year ministers cooperating under the Board had baptized "not less than 15,000" to whom they gave certificates of recommendation for membership in Baptist churches. "Many more, converted through their instrumentality, united with other denominations."

At its meeting in 1864 the Association adopted a resolution offered by A. E. Dickinson that a committee be appointed to consider some plan for the maintenance and education of the children of the soldiers who had died or been disabled during the war. This committee reported that the subject was "one of unspeakable importance" and a "Provisional Committee" was set up to publish in the Richmond daily papers and in the

11. These were supplemented by socks for the soldiers, knitted by mothers, wives and sisters in the homes and sent to the Depository in Richmond for distribution. (Robert Ryland in *Religious Herald*, Jan. 14, 1864.)

12. The Board in certain cases supplemented the pay of chaplains whose pecuniary condition was such that the government pay was not sufficient for the support of their families.

*Religious Herald*¹³ an address "soliciting the cooperation of all the good people of the Commonwealth in the effort to save from ruin and degradation the children of our brave men who shed their blood in defense of our homes and altars." They were authorized "at once to inaugurate measures for the collection of funds," to begin operations at their own discretion and to report a plan at the next meeting of the Association.

In the Wake of the Storm

When the General Association met in June, 1865, the War was over, the Confederacy had fallen and the army had been dissolved. The conflagration that followed the evacuation of Richmond had consumed everything belonging to the *Religious Herald* except its mailing list. Most of the endowment of Richmond College had been invested in Confederate States bonds which had become valueless. Federal troops quartered in the College building took away the library and the scientific apparatus and everything else portable. To sustain his family President Ryland carried the milk from his cow to customers morning and evening.¹⁴ The building of Richmond Female Institute was the Federal Headquarters. No money was in circulation, the postal service was discontinued, Virginia was undergoing the rigors of military rule and the uncertainties of political reconstruction. Its people were disfranchised and impoverished.

Despite these difficulties former interests were to be revived and institutions reestablished while facing the problems of readjustment to the new political, social and spiritual relations of the two races. They were complicated by the activities of the Freedmen's Bureau and of the "carpetbaggers," who came into the State to advance their political fortunes and sowed distrust of their former owners in the minds of the Negroes.

13. July 21, 1864.

14. *Richmond Dispatch*, August 24, 1876.

Many young lives that had promised much for needed leadership had been sacrificed on fields of battle.

The General Association was the first body in the whole South to begin the work of religious reconstruction.¹⁵ It resolved in June, 1865:

That whatever may have been our past views, aims or efforts regarding the issues which have divided the Northern and Southern States, we deem it our duty as patriots and Christians to accept the order of Providence, yield unreserved and faithful obedience to the "powers that be" and to cultivate such a spirit and to preserve such a course of conduct as shall best promote the peace and prosperity of the country; and we earnestly recommend to our brethren throughout the State to prove themselves to be loyal citizens of the United States, and to enter with zeal and activity upon the discharge of the responsibilities devolved on them by their new social and civic relations.

The Association also resolved:

That recent events have neither destroyed nor diminished our obligation as Christians to prosecute the work of instructing and evangelizing the colored people among us, in which we have been for so many years and with such gratifying success engaged.

That we recommend to our District Associations, churches and ministers to originate and carry forward with unabated Christian zeal all measures proper in their respective spheres for the spiritual enlightenment and elevation of this class of our people.

That the principles of piety call on all lovers of our Lord Jesus Christ and the principles of patriotism on all lovers of our re-united country to discountenance and counteract every influence tending to alienate the confidence and affection of the colored people from the white community in which they will probably find homes, and to create jealousies and foster dissensions between the races.¹⁶

The Provisional Committee, appointed at the last meeting of the General Association to provide for the education of the children of deceased and disabled soldiers, reported that large sums of money were collected and aid extended to not less than

15. *Religious Herald*, June 7, 1866.

16. General Association Minutes, 1865, pp. 18, 19, 21.

seven or eight hundred¹⁷ needy children and disabled soldiers of all religious denominations in a field otherwise unoccupied. The Committee was continued and instructed "to prosecute the work to the utmost extent of the funds they may be able to collect."¹⁸

The correspondence and records of the State Mission Board had been destroyed in the evacuation fire in Richmond. As soon as mail facilities were re-established the Board proposed "to recommence their work and to prosecute it to the utmost extent of the means that may be contributed."

The Sunday School and Publication Board urged that their home churches give outlets for the religious activities of the returned soldiers, many of whom had been converted in camps and hospitals, and that they afford immediate employment to those ministers who had been in service to the Board as chaplains, missionaries and colporters in the army.

With faith and resourcefulness the churches met the new and difficult economic situation. Until United States currency came into circulation again the country churches contributed for the support of their pastors provisions "in kind" that they could use or could barter for necessities at the country stores. When the collection basket was passed at Sunday school the children filled it with eggs that were sold to traders with the cities and the Federal army camps.

The Colored Members Form Separate Organizations

The first action of the Dover Association at its meeting in September, 1865, was the appointment of a committee on the relation of the churches to their colored members. The committee reported that the African churches, belonging to the Dover, proposed to form an independent association. This was

17. The exact number could not be obtained because postal communications had been cut off.

18. General Association Minutes, 1865, pp. 16, 30.

the "Colored Shiloh Regular Baptist Association of Virginia," organized in 1865 by seven African churches in Richmond, Manchester and Petersburg.¹⁹ The committee recommended:

In cases in which the colored members prefer independent organizations, the churches be advised to aid them in organizing separate churches and maintaining religious worship. The circumstances of the churches are so diversified that no specific counsels can be suited to all.

The churches of the Albemarle Association had 4,708 colored members in August, 1865, and reported a small loss in 1866. The next year the decrease was 1,317. Of these, 915 were members of the Charlottesville African Church which had gone into the Colored Shiloh Association. This left in the churches of the Albemarle 3,108 colored members for whom it urged a Sabbath school at every church where practical.

In response to a query in July, 1865, the Rappahannock Association was "decidedly of the opinion that separate organizations should neither be required nor encouraged." In 1866 the Association saw no objection to granting to a colored member a license to exercise his gifts as a public speaker. Enon, Mattaponi, Mathews, Salem and Upper Zion reported that they had already dismissed all or most of their colored members for the purpose of forming separate churches. The colored members of Shiloh, numbering 522, had formed an independent organization without applying for letters. Four churches reported colored Sunday schools with nearly 700 pupils. The largest, 300, was taught by thirty young white women and men at Upper King and Queen. It was two years afterward that a committee of this church, with the concurrence of the leading colored members, recommended that they "form an organization of their own if they see fit to do so," and tendered them "all the assistance in our power to give." So Mt. Olive was

19. Robert Ryland had resigned in 1865 as pastor of the First African of Richmond. He was followed by James H. Holmes, formerly a deacon. All of the churches now had pastors of their own race.

formed. Henry Taylor was pastor until his death many years later. Deacons Reuben Roots and Lewis Booker had held office before the separation and were experienced in matters of discipline.²⁰

Bruington in 1866 gave to Kingston Roy, a colored preacher, a certificate to the county court to enable him to get a license to perform marriages. It appointed a committee to help its colored members if they desired separate organizations. These they did not form until 1870, when New Mt. Zion was organized, and Bethlehem the following year.²¹

Colored members of Mattaponi, numbering 151, were constituted as Zion in 1869 by its pastor, Alfred Bagby, and neighboring ministers. Beverly Sparks, a licentiate of Mattaponi, was ordained its pastor.²²

Other associations took similar action. The churches generally, through committees, assisted the groups that desired to separate in perfecting their organizations, in selecting and ordaining pastors and deacons, in acquiring, by gift, sites for meeting houses and afforded aid in building them.

In 1868 there were three colored district associations—Norfolk Union²³ with 37 churches and 11,767 members, Shiloh African with 75 churches and 25,213 members and Valley African (organized in 1867) with 17 churches and 1,754 members.

Fifteen members of Norfolk Union and Shiloh met in May, 1868, at Zion Church in Portsmouth and organized the Virginia Baptist State Convention.²⁴ In 1869 its affiliate, the Virginia Baptist State Sabbath School Convention, held its first meeting.²⁵

20. Upper King and Queen Minute Book.

21. Bruington Minute Book.

22. *Religious Herald*, August 5, 1869.

23. Norfolk Union was formed in 1864 by churches in the Norfolk area occupied by the Federal forces.

24. *American Baptist Year Book*, 1869, pp. 103, 87.

25. Minutes, 1880, p. 20.

The General Association of West Virginia

Delegates from the Broad Run, Judson, Mt. Pisgah, Parkersburg, Teay's Valley and Union district associations, meeting in November, 1865, at Parkersburg, in the recently created State of West Virginia, formed the Baptist General Association of West Virginia. By 1868 all the district associations in West Virginia had come in and 249 churches, having 14,692 members, were affiliated with it.²⁶

After these withdrawals there remained in 1868 in cooperation with the General Association of Virginia 19 district associations, 545 churches, 361 ordained ministers, 55,667 white and 10,469 colored members.

A major factor in the recovery of Baptist interests after the War was the reappearance in October, 1865, of the *Religious Herald* under the editorship of J. B. Jeter and A. E. Dickinson who had acquired from Sands, Shaver and Co. its mailing list, the only asset that had not been consumed by the great fire in April. Through its editorials and its contributors in Virginia and many other states it soon gained an outstanding position of influence in Southern journalism. David Shaver continued as associate editor through 1866, and then became editor of the *Christian Index and South-Western Baptist* in Atlanta. William Sands, publisher of the *Herald* from its beginning, died in 1868, having "labored with untiring devotion, contributing in no small measure to the growth and prosperity of the Baptist churches in Virginia."²⁷

Richmond College

When the General Association met in June, 1866, the Education Board reported that during the year they had collected

26. *American Baptist Year Book*, 1869, p. 104. Churches in Berkeley, Jefferson and Mercer counties continued to belong to the Virginia General and district associations.

27. *General Association Minutes*, 1869, p. 55.

no funds, assisted no young men, transacted no business. Robert Ryland, after thirty-four years of service, had resigned the presidency of Richmond College. Its faculty had been scattered, most of the endowment lost and its buildings plundered. A small group of its former students sent Herbert H. Harris (1837-97), John C. Long (1833-94) and George Boardman Taylor to urge on the General Association the immediate re-opening of Richmond College.

The Association resolved that "the exercises of Richmond College ought to be resumed at the beginning of the next sessional year." James Thomas, Jr. (1806-82) offered to give five thousand dollars to the endowment. The Association requested the Board of Trustees of the College to take steps to increase it to a sum of not less than one hundred thousand dollars. The Trustees met the next day and engaged A. M. Poindexter to canvass the churches for it—a work that he had performed so well before. Tiberius Gracchus Jones, pastor in Norfolk, was elected president and on October 1 the College reopened. The president was professor of Moral Science. Bennet Puryear (1826-1914), who had been a member of the earlier faculty from 1850 to 1859, was professor of Natural Sciences. Edmund Harrison (1837-1916), professor of Latin and French; Herbert H. Harris, professor of Greek and German and Edward B. Smith (1833-90), professor of Mathematics, were graduates of the University of Virginia and had been officers in the Confederate Army. In 1868 J. L. M. Curry (1825-1903) became professor of English. His services in Congress, both of the United States and of the Confederate States, and his extensive acquaintance opened to his students widened horizons. In 1869 when Jones returned to the pastorate, Puryear became chairman of the faculty—a post which he held for twenty-five years. For a generation this group molded the standards of the institution.

There were ninety matriculates in 1866-7. The ten who were preparing for the ministry had all been Confederate soldiers.²⁸

Following their army practice, these ministerial students formed a "mess" and in the scarcity of money were supplied with provisions from their homes and churches.²⁹ This proved so successful in reducing the cost of board that messes were organized by the resident students generally.

In 1867 Edward Jarworth Owen, a Baptist minister in Missouri, gave to the College his valuable library of 2,597 volumes.³⁰

The Federal authorities vacated the building of the Richmond Female Institute and in the fall of 1866 it reopened.³¹ Charles H. Winston continued as president until 1873 when he became professor of Physics in Richmond College.

Schools for the "Colored Population"

At its meeting in 1866 the General Association resolved "that it is a sacred and important duty to establish, wherever practicable, Sunday schools for our colored population" and urged "prompt and persistent attention to this duty." The State Mission Board reported that the committee of the Board "on measures for the spiritual enlightenment of the colored people among us," authorized by the previous General Association, had held an interview with pastors and deacons of adjacent African churches which "disclosed that they had decided to

28. A veteran who was a student from 1867 to 1870 was William Henry Roberts (1847-1919) from Roanoke. As the pioneer missionary of the American Baptist Missionary Union to the Kachins, wild mountain tribesmen in northern Burma, he reduced their spoken language to written characters, evangelized and civilized them. (The Fascinating Story of a Missionary Pioneer in the *Watchman-Examiner*, July 8, 1920.)

29. Upper King and Queen minutes for December, 1868, state: "J. M. Garnett reported that about 36 bu. of provisions had been collected for the young brethren, preparing for the ministry at Richmond College and had been forwarded." Meal, bacon, potatoes and black-eyed peas were especially desired for them by the Education Board. (*Religious Herald*, October 28, 1869.)

30. *Religious Herald*, November 7, 14, 1867.

31. Hollins Institute, Roanoke Female Institute and Albemarle Institute were not in the path of hostilities, and did not suspend during the War.

repel all efforts of ours except on conditions transcending the spheres of both the Board and the Association." There of necessity the matter rested but the committee invited attention afresh to "this momentous question." The committee appointed by the Association to consider this report of the State Mission Board recommended and the Association agreed that:

We should be ready at all times and not refuse to afford them both literary and religious instruction. The policy of a former state of things having ceased, the prejudices of the community should also cease and wherever practical and agreeable common schools should be favored. Sabbath schools established by the colored people should be kindly encouraged and the aid of our white members afforded when acceptable.

The Training of Colored Ministers

In 1867 the National Theological Institute and University, an organization of Northern Baptists for the training of colored ministers, sent Nathaniel Colver (1794-1870) to Richmond.³² He engaged Robert Ryland to assist him and in September they opened a school with thirty to forty pupils. Colver instructed in Biblical knowledge and Ryland in elementary subjects. After the first year Colver resigned because of failing health and Ryland moved to Kentucky and became principal of the Shelbyville Female Institute. Charles H. Corey (1834-1899) was transferred as principal from a similar school in Georgia and developed the work with tact and success. Before he had been in Richmond a year the *Religious Herald*³³ said of him, "He is a brother of noble Christian character, kind and conciliatory in his intercourse with all classes of the community. He is doing a work which entitles him to the gratitude of his brethren, North and South."

The enterprises of the National Theological Institute were taken over by the American Baptist Home Mission Society. In 1870 the school acquired a building on 19th and Main Streets.

32. J. A. Smith, *Nathaniel Colver*; C. H. Corey, *The Richmond Theological Seminary*.

33. *Religious Herald*, April 15, 1869.

It was incorporated in 1876 as the Richmond Institute and in 1886 as the Richmond Theological Seminary. In 1899 it united with the Wayland Seminary, founded in Washington in 1865 by the American Baptist Home Mission Society, to form the Virginia Union University and moved to its present campus of fifty-five acres fronting on North Lombardy Street in Richmond. Hartshorn Memorial College for Women was founded in Richmond in 1883 and was absorbed by Virginia Union in 1932.³⁴

The Sunday School and Publication Board

In 1866 the Sunday School and Publication Board had reports from only fifty-nine Sunday schools. A. E. Dickinson's resignation as its superintendent was accepted "with unfeigned regret" and the Board elected Charles H. Ryland, pastor of Carmel, who served until 1870. The objectives of the Board and of its new superintendent were a Sunday school in every Baptist church, to encourage schools already existing and to supply the schools with books and aids of every sort. As a guide for the selection of books for their depleted libraries, the superintendent compiled and distributed in 1867 a catalogue of more than a thousand titles of books, free "from political sentiments" and "not antagonistic to Baptist principles." The Board reported to the General Association in 1867 that it was in correspondence with 275 schools.³⁵ Of these, 245 had been aided with teaching material and reading matter. It was gratified that so many Sunday schools for the improvement of the colored people had been established during the year, and that the interest in them was deepening and spreading. The Board had aided liberally a number of these schools and its policy would be to foster them in every proper way. The report

34. The presidents of Virginia Union, since Corey, have been Malcolm McVicar, 1899 to 1904; George Rice Hovey, 1905 to 1918; William John Clark, 1919 to 1941 and John Malcus Ellison, since 1941.

35. This was not half as many as the number of churches cooperating with the General Association.

of 1869 noted "that the colored Baptist churches have their own State organizations and their Sunday school work is progressing well. Their schools are numerous and large."

Under the direction of the superintendent, a State Sunday School Convention was held in Richmond for three days in March, 1868. It was attended by 300 delegates from 155 schools and was followed by district conventions which gave an impetus that by the next year increased the number of schools to 450.

Increase in Gifts and Activities

In 1868 the State Mission Board reported to the General Association gifts of \$4,111.67, a considerable increase over the \$1,246.56, contributed the year before. It had twenty-seven missionaries in the field. The Education Board reported thirty-one students preparing at Richmond College for the ministry—a larger number than ever before. The Foreign Mission Board announced that during the last fiscal year Virginia had contributed more to Foreign Missions than any other state connected with the Southern Baptist Convention except Maryland. The Committee for the Education of Soldiers' Children reported that its corresponding secretary, William F. Broaddus, had collected during the year \$1,849.17 for the tuition in neighborhood schools of 321 children at one dollar a month each. It owed for the tuition of 228 children, "who but for this organization would grow to manhood without even learning to read." The Association requested Broaddus to devote his labors more exclusively to the education of these children and commended him to the public. The next year more than 800 were enabled to attend school and the year following more than a thousand. Then the coming of free public schools rendered the continuance of the Committee unnecessary.³⁶

In the two years since his appointment in 1866, A. M. Poindexter had raised for the endowment of Richmond Col-

36. General Association Minutes, 1868, 1869, 1870.

lege \$78,000 in individual bonds of \$100 and \$2,600 in other amounts.³⁷

At its meeting in 1868 the General Association adopted the report of the Committee on a Plan of Systematic Benevolence, which had been appointed the year before. It recommended earnestly to the pastors and members of the churches that, instead of one annual collection sent up to the meeting of the General Association for all the interests it fostered, "contributions be made to missionary purposes at least once a month and when practicable, on the first day of every week. So the beneficent effects of the habit of giving to God's cause, as a means of grace, would be spread over the whole year and made a part of the Lord's Day worship."

On the recommendation of the Committee on Agencies, the Association resolved:

That there be appointed a Corresponding Secretary of the General Association, to whom, in connection with the several Boards, shall be committed all the interests of the General Association. That no one of the Boards shall appoint or continue any paid agent except by the advice and consent of the Corresponding Secretary. His business would be, not the collection of money, but arranging plans and putting them into efficient operation to cause each church to attend to regular contributions within itself to each Board.

The committee appointed to employ a Corresponding Secretary and fix his salary selected Henry K. Ellyson, who had been Corresponding Secretary of the General Association from 1848 until he became Corresponding Secretary of the State Mission Board from its organization in 1855. Ellyson accepted the appointment but declined to receive any salary and served gratuitously until his death. As his business and civic interests³⁸ prevented his giving his whole time to the work of the General Association, Richard Hugh Bagby (1820-70), pastor of Bruington, was elected Associate Corresponding Secretary in June. He died in October.

37. *Religious Herald*, June 11, 1868.

38. Ellyson was co-publisher of the *Daily Dispatch* and in 1870 was elected mayor of Richmond.

Advance Again

1870 - 1899

I_N 1870 gifts to all the causes fostered by the General Association were \$10,572.12½, of which \$2,719.72 was designated for State Missions. The next year of a total of \$12,351.20, State Missions received \$4,583.13. At the meeting of the Association the delegates pledged an additional \$5,375 to its earliest interest, the evangelizing of Virginia.

At the meeting of the Rappahannock Association in 1870 a committee was appointed to form a society for the assistance of families of pastors who died while members of the Association. The next year there was presented a constitution of the Pastors Aid Society of the Rappahannock Association. Robert L. Montague, A. Browne Evans and Benjamin F. Dew were its president, secretary and treasurer. This society became unnecessary when a committee appointed by the General Association in 1871 secured the incorporation of the Board of Trustees of the Baptist Ministers' Relief Fund of Virginia to receive and disburse all funds contributed for the relief of aged and destitute ministers and their widows and orphans. The Board was composed of Chas. L. Cocke, Thomas J. Starke, Joseph F. Cottrell, J. H. C. Jones, C. T. Sutherlin, Thomas J. Evans, W. C. Dandridge, Miles Turpin and William R. Vaughan—all laymen. After the Ministers' Relief and Annuity Board of the Southern Baptist Convention was organized the Baptist Ministers' Relief Fund of Virginia continued independently but was restricted by the General Association in 1919 to the use of its income from invested funds for donations in emergencies and exceptional cases.

New River Association and Oak Hill Academy

Twelve churches with 550 members, in Grayson County and the neighboring part of North Carolina, formed in 1871 the second New River Association.¹ J. B. Jones was its first moderator and W. C. Parks its first clerk. The Association soon became interested in having an academy within its bounds. In 1877 Oak Hill opened with 88 pupils. It was under the control of trustees elected by the Association. In a charter granted by the Legislature of Virginia in 1880 the Board of Trustees was made self-perpetuating. In 1911 it returned the property to the Association which reopened the Academy. In 1921 the support and control of Oak Hill was taken over by the Board of Missions and Education.

Relations Between the General Association and the State Convention

The General Association received in 1871 a communication from the Virginia Baptist State Convention:

Dear Brethren—We greet you with Christian salutations; we are a body of Baptists organized into a State Convention in 1868, for mission work in this, our noble State of Virginia.

Our sole object is the diffusion of the Gospel of Christ and the interest of His kingdom, by sending out missionaries, planting and training churches, and assisting feeble Baptist churches in the support of their pastors throughout the State of Virginia, as far as lieth within the ability of the Convention.

We are adherents to one faith, one Lord and one baptism, yea, to all the vital principles of the great Baptist family, therefore, we respectfully ask correspondence with you in the laudable work of evangelizing this our State. For opening correspondence with us, we send with this letter our beloved President, Richard Wells, of Richmond, and pastor of the Ebenezer Church in said city. Our Convention recently met in Lynchburg. We have not our statistics for 1871 at hand. Our statistics

1. The first New River, organized in 1793, had become anti-mission.

for 1870 stand: Churches, 37; Baptisms, 1,800; Total membership, 22,387. We received several additions at our recent annual session. We have a State Sabbath School Union under the auspices of this Convention. It is composed of 26 schools and 3,100 scholars. Pray for us, dear brethren; may the love of Christ, which passeth all knowledge, dwell richly in your hearts.

Receive our beloved President and representative in love, and may the blessing of Christ, the great head of the churches, ever preside over you, direct your deliberations and work for our common Master. Amen.

RICHARD WELLS, *President*

E. CORPEW, *Corresponding Secretary*

This was referred by the Association to a committee of which J. B. Jeter was chairman. It recommended that:

We fully accord to our colored brethren the right, which we claim for ourselves, of organizing and governing churches, and of making all needful arrangements for their support, worship and prosperity. We rejoice and thank God for the success of their efforts in diffusing the Knowledge of the Gospel, and building up the Redeemer's kingdom. We cordially reciprocate the kind and Christian sentiments of their letter, and shall deem it a privilege to aid them in their pious labors, by such cooperation as may seem expedient.

It proposed and the Association resolved "with an almost perfect unanimity":

That from considerations, which we need not specify and cannot control, we deem it inexpedient to enter into an exchange of corresponding messengers with the Convention; but, that the President of the Association be requested to address a letter to the Convention, assuring them of our friendly regards, our sympathy in their work, and our readiness to cooperate with them, so far as circumstances may permit.

The Convention at its meeting in 1872 received the letter from the General Association and the report of Richard Wells. It unanimously resolved:

Whereas we have attempted to open a correspondence with the Baptist General Association of Virginia and said Association rejected

our delegate, our offers for correspondence and interchange of messengers, and that without a just cause, to our knowledge, that we will make no further efforts for correspondence with said Association, but shall proceed separate and alone of them, in our work of evangelization, in the even temper of our way—trusting in God who hath no respect to persons but he that worketh righteousness in every nation is accepted of Him—considering that said proffers of friendship are hypocritical, and that we have shown ourselves to be destitute of prejudice to our white brethren.

In the discussion in the *Religious Herald* following this action of the General Association, Jeter defended it on the ground that the invitation to colored delegates to seats in the Association would involve their invitation to the hospitality of homes. This would lead to “intimate social intercourse” between the races and would destroy racial purity.² But when the Convention met in 1874 in the town of Liberty in Bedford County, colored ministers preached by invitation on Sunday morning and afternoon at the white Baptist, Methodist and Presbyterian churches.³ By 1879 the fear of complications had so far subsided that the General Association on motion of E. W. Warren⁴ (1820-93) appointed a committee on “the propriety of cultivating more intimate relations with the colored Baptists of the State.” The committee recommended the appointment of corresponding delegates to the Convention, and that the Association invite the Convention to reciprocate by sending corresponding delegates and that:

This Association provide seats in the body to be assigned said delegates and make, or cause to be made, suitable provisions for the hospitable and appropriate entertainment of said colored delegates during the session of the Association.

The report was adopted and F. R. Boston (1848-1911), O. B. Flippo (1835-1903), Reuben Jones (1808-85), W. D. Thomas

2. *Religious Herald*, June 8, September 7, September 28, November 9, 1871.

3. Convention Minutes, 1874.

4. Pastor, First Baptist Church of Richmond, 1876-9.

(1833-1901) and E. W. Warren were appointed messengers. The Convention in turn, sent "fraternal greetings" to the meeting of the General Association in 1880 by Walter Brooks, J. M. T. Patterson and Richard Spiller.

Missionaries

Since 1860 no Virginia Baptist had gone as a missionary to a foreign land until December, 1871, when Kate F. Evans (1842-1918) of Painesville, Amelia County, sailed for Burma under appointment by the Woman's American Baptist Foreign Mission Society as its first missionary. To this field she gave her life.⁵

At its meeting in 1871 the Goshen Association decided to cooperate with the General Association and the Boards of the Southern Baptist Convention in their missionary activities.

In 1872 Edmonia Harris Moon of Albemarle County, a graduate of the Richmond Female Institute in 1868, was sent by the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention to reinforce its mission at Tung Chow, China. Representatives of the Missionary Societies in five Richmond churches met in 1872 and organized the Richmond Female Missionary Society for the purpose of raising the four hundred dollars to support her on the field. The first year it raised "around twelve hundred dollars."⁶ The next year Edmonia was joined by her older sister, Charlotte ("Lottie") (1840-1912) who had graduated in 1861 with unusual distinction from the Albemarle Female Institute. In 1874 the president of the Richmond Society, Mrs. J. B. Jeter (1824-87), appealed successfully through the *Religious Herald* to "the Baptist Ladies of Virginia" for aid in building a home for the Misses Moon and for their school in Tung Chow. Because of the failure of Edmonia's

5. Card file of Woman's American Baptist Foreign Missionary Society. *Religious Herald*, February 17, 1873.

6. *Religious Herald*, September 16, 1873.

health, Charlotte came back with her in 1876 but returned in 1877 to China, where for the rest of her life she was unremitting in her activity. Her letters and her personal contacts when home on furlough were a large factor in stimulating missionary interest among Baptist women in the South.

In 1873 at the call of the Foreign Mission Board, George Boardman Taylor⁷ and his wife, Susan Spotswood Braxton went with their four children to Rome to take charge of the Italian Mission and remained at this post for the rest of their lives.

William W. Colley, a native of Prince Edward County and student at the Richmond Theological Institute, was sent to Nigeria in 1875 by the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention. On account of his health he returned in 1879, leaving the work in the care of Solomon Cosby, a missionary of the Virginia Baptist State Convention. Cosby died in Africa in 1881. Colley became the corresponding secretary of the Foreign Mission Convention of Colored Baptists from its organization at Montgomery, Alabama, in 1880 until 1893, when he went back to Africa as its missionary.

Nannie Winston Bland (1855-85) of Chesterfield County, was married in 1878 to William J. David (1850-1919), of Mississippi, who had gone to Africa first in 1875. They sailed in 1879 to take up the work in Nigeria, where she died.

Other missionaries appointed to foreign fields from Virginia prior to 1900 were: Miss Sallie Stein (1880), Mrs. H. W. Provence (Mary Hall) (1891), Robert E. Chambers and Mrs. Chambers (Mattie Hall) (1895), Miss Edmonia Sale (1896) and Miss Alice E. Parker (1899) for China; Mrs. J. H. Eager (Olive Board) (1880) for Italy; Miss Bessie H. Maynard (1894) for Japan; and Mrs. J. G. Chastain (Lillian Wright) (1888), Miss L. C. Cabiness (1890), Hugh P. McCormick

7. Taylor was pastor in Staunton, 1858-73. He had been chaplain at the University of Virginia and was the author of a life of his father, *James Barnett Taylor*; of *Oakland Stories*; of two books for boys, *Roger Bernard* and *Coster Grew*; and of *Walter Ennis*, a story of the early Baptists in Virginia.

(1886), A. B. Rudd and Mrs. Rudd (May Bagby) (1888), Miss Rannie E. Russell (1888) for Mexico and John A. Barker (1888) for Brazil.

The Semi-Centennial of the General Association.
"The Memorial Campaign"

At the meeting of the General Association in 1872, on the motion of C. H. Ryland, a committee was appointed to arrange for the celebration the next year of the 50th anniversary of the body. The committee proposed:

As an expression of gratitude to our heavenly Father for His preserving care and His great goodness in causing us to grow from a few to a great multitude, that we endeavor to raise \$300,000 toward the endowment and buildings of Richmond College . . . That a memorial commemorative of the services of our fathers in securing the passage of the Virginia statute for religious liberty be erected on the College grounds.

George W. Beale, C. C. Bitting, A. E. Dickinson, Joseph R. Harrison (1832-1901), William E. Hatcher (1834-1912), Thomas Hume, Jr., J. C. Long, C. H. Ryland, George B. Taylor and William D. Thomas were appointed to prepare for general circulation an address on the objectives of the celebration and to adopt measures to secure the Memorial Fund. John Lansing Burrows (1814-93), pastor of the First Baptist Church of Richmond, was released for the year to organize its presentation to the individual churches by visiting speakers. The linkage of the two ideas—honor to the memory of the leaders in the past and provision for the training of leaders for the future—swept the campaign to success. It gave to Virginia Baptists, slowly pulling out from the wake of a disastrous war, a renewed and refreshing acquaintance with their beginnings, revived their just pride in past achievements and kindled their confidence in future accomplishments. The effort climaxed in the semicentennial session of the General Association—the largest

religious gathering that had ever assembled in Virginia. More than 1,700 accredited delegates had enrolled when the Association convened in May, 1873, for a session of five days with the Second Baptist Church in Richmond, with which its first meeting had been held fifty years before. The next morning "the assembly, estimated at ten thousand persons,"⁸ gathered in the tabernacle erected on the campus of Richmond College for the Memorial Services. James Fife, a member of the first meeting of the Association, conducted the opening exercises and gave an account of its origin. The immense congregation then listened with unflagging interest for over two hours to the address on *The Connection of the Baptists with the Religious History of the State* by J. L. M. Curry,⁹ whose eloquence his auditors never forgot. J. L. Burrows reported for the Memorial Fund that despite severe droughts and the prevalence throughout the State of an unprecedented disease among the horses, which handicapped travel and the assembling of congregations, the churches had been visited by volunteer speakers at their own expense. In addition to \$193,554.30 that had been subscribed in Virginia, \$20,000 had come from other states. In response to "a thrilling appeal" by John A. Broadus an additional \$35,615 was pledged by attendants at the meeting.

While the financial panic, which followed, rendered impossible the full payment of subscriptions, the Campaign added \$150,000 to the endowment of Richmond College, set it securely on its feet and created a ground swell of interest and pride in its welfare. The central part of the College building was erected and the school of Physics was established. Charles H. Winston was its professor from 1883 until he retired in 1908. To collect payment on pledges, to invest the endowment and to direct their financial policy the trustees in 1874 elected Charles H. Ryland, pastor in Alexandria, financial secretary. The next year

8. Minutes of General Association, 1873, pp. 19, 21.

9. *Religious Herald*, June 5, 1873.

he became secretary-treasurer, which position he filled until he retired in 1911.

District Associations

Delegates from thirteen churches in the Lebanon Association, north of Clinch Mountain, most of them in Russell County, organized the New Lebanon Association in 1875. E. Kiser was the first moderator and E. D. Miller, the first clerk and treasurer. In 1876 the Augusta Association was formed by twenty-four churches with 1,863 members from the Albemarle and the Valley.

The twenty-nine district associations in affiliation with the General Association in 1875 reported 650 churches, 353 ministers and 63,435 members. Statistics for six colored associations — Norfolk Union, Shiloh, Valley, Bluestone (organized in 1871), Banister (organized in 1872) and Hassadiah (organized in 1874)—showed 520 churches, 247 ministers and 110,525 members.¹⁰

The Virginia Baptist Historical Society

“Impressed with the importance of gathering and preserving the extant materials of our Baptist history,”¹¹ Charles H. Ryland in March, 1876, obtained from the Legislature a charter incorporating the Virginia Baptist Historical Society. At the following meeting of the General Association, held in the Baptist Meeting House in Culpeper, on the site of the Colonial jail in which so many of our Baptist fathers were imprisoned, the Society was organized with J. B. Jeter, president, R. L. T. Beale, vice-president, and H. H. Harris, secretary-treasurer. Other members of the Executive Committee were J. L. M. Curry, chairman, William S. Bland (1820-1876), Thomas S.

10. Minutes of General Association, 1876, p. 58.

11. Ms. Minutes, Virginia Baptist Historical Society.

Dunaway (1829-1915), Joseph R. Garlick (1829-1912) and C. H. Ryland. The General Association pledged its cooperation and has continued to give it a place on the program and to print its reports in the Association's minutes. Richmond College has provided quarters for its collections.

The Dollar Roll Campaign

As their part in celebrating the National Centennial in 1876, in commemoration of the triumph of Religious Liberty and as a thank offering for the blessings of the century, the Centennial Committee of the General Association and the trustees of Richmond College launched the Dollar Roll Campaign to increase the endowment of the College. Representatives in many churches secured individual gifts of one dollar and the donor received a lithographed certificate bearing portraits of J. B. Jeter and Robert Ryland and a picture of the College building. That year the faculty consisted of seven professors and the number of students was 150, the largest enrollment up to that time. There were more students from Virginia than in the academic department of any other literary institution in the State.

Landmarkism

The system called "Landmarkism" had been urged by J. R. Graves in his *Tennessee Baptist* in 1850. It had been supported by J. M. Pendleton in *An Old Landmark Reset*, published in 1854, which gave its name to the movement. It received scant attention in Virginia until the 1870s when for a decade the *Religious Herald* opened its columns to its defenders, most of them out of the State, and its critics, among them editor Jeter.

The Landmarkers held that Pedobaptist¹² churches, not being groups of immersed believers, were not true Scriptural churches.

12. Pedobaptists practice the baptism of infants.

Consequently their ministers should not be recognized as Scripturally ordained and should not be invited into Baptist pulpits. They held that even the baptism of a believer by immersion if administered by other than a minister authorized by a "regular" Baptist Church was not "valid" (Anti-alien immersion) and he must be re-baptized "regularly" before being accepted for church membership.¹³ Landmarkers claimed that in all ages since the days of the Apostles there had been churches holding the views and practices of Baptist churches today.¹⁴

Jeter's position was that "Old Landmarkism" was really a departure from the landmarks set up by the early Baptists in Virginia.¹⁵ The Landmarkers' theories were so convincingly controverted by the *Herald's* editorials and contributors that in 1880 editor Dickinson, remarking on an adherent in another state, noted that he had been pastor "in Virginia, where Landmarkers are so few and far between."¹⁶

Women's Missionary Organizations

Following the action of the Southern Baptist Convention in 1877, recommending the formation in each state of a Central Committee of women to promote missionary organizations and activities, Henry Allen Tupper (1828-1902), secretary of the Foreign Mission Board of the Convention, asked the Richmond Woman's Missionary Society¹⁷ to suggest to the Board members for a Central Committee for Virginia and that Mrs. Jeter be its president. Other officers selected were Mrs. S. Turpin, vice-president; Mrs. J. L. M. Curry, followed shortly by Mrs. Edwin Wortham, corresponding secretary; Mrs. Theodore

13. Cathcart, *Baptist Encyclopaedia*, article on "Old Landmarkism."

14. Jeter in *Religious Herald*, November 29, 1877.

15. *Religious Herald*, September 20, 1877.

16. *Religious Herald*, August 5, 1880, "News and Notes."

17. Since 1874 the Richmond Woman's Missionary Society under the leadership of its president, Mrs. J. B. Jeter, had promoted the organization in the churches of Virginia of women's societies for the support of foreign missions.

Ellyson, recording secretary and Mrs. Richard Adam, treasurer—all residents of Richmond.¹⁸

In 1885 the Southern Baptist Convention recommended that the statewide bodies, rather than the Foreign Mission Board, should foster the Central Committees. When its Committee on Cooperation brought to the General Association in 1887 a request that it be authorized to aid these women in perfecting such an organization as would bring them into cooperation with all phases of the work of the Association, a large number of delegates opposed it as they deemed it "altogether unwise and inexpedient to establish such a Central Committee of women for the prosecution of separate and independent mission work among the female members of the churches."¹⁹

Conforming to this action, Virginia women were not represented officially, though they acted as hostesses, when delegates from ten other states met in Richmond during the session of the Convention in 1888 and formed the Woman's Missionary Union Auxiliary to the Southern Baptist Convention.

At its next meeting the General Association changed its mind and requested the Central Committee to continue the collection of money and its distribution through the treasurer of the Association to whatever objects the donors might wish to apply it, to make arrangements for the promotion of their work, to fill all vacancies in their number and to submit a report of their work to the General Association annually. The Central Committee was now free to affiliate with the Southern Union and to share in its first Christmas offering for China, suggested by Lottie Moon, for whom it became a memorial. From Mrs. Jeter's death in 1887 until 1892 Mrs. W. E. Hatcher was president of the Central Committee. At the call of Mrs. Abby Manly Gwathmey, president of the Central Committee 1893-97, the first "Annual Meeting of Central Committee Woman's

18. *Tupper*, *Decade of Foreign Missions*, 525.

19. For objections in full, *General Association Minutes*, 1888, pp. 40-44.

Missionary Societies Auxiliary to the Baptist General Association of Virginia²⁰ was held in 1896. In 1899 they organized as the Woman's Missionary Union of Virginia, adopted a constitution, elected officers and an Executive Committee to replace the Central Committee. Mrs. John A. Barker was chosen president. That year 435 societies reported and gifts aggregated \$13,031.53.²¹ Of this, \$783.33 had been given by the Sunbeam Bands, missionary societies of small children. They had been started in 1886 by George Braxton Taylor, pastor, and Anna G. Elsom, teacher of the "Sunbeam Class" in the Sunday School of Fairmount Church in Nelson County. They spread widely and in 1898 the Central Committee appointed Mrs. George W. Williams, Sunbeam Band Superintendent.

Richmond College

On the death of J. B. Jeter in 1880 the desire to honor him found expression in the erection of Jeter Memorial Hall, the south wing of the main building of Richmond College. It housed the College library and the James Thomas, Jr., Museum and Art Hall. A. E. Dickinson invaded the North and gifts to the endowment, for the library and for scholarships and aid funds marked his progress and attested the generosity of many Northern friends whose interest he kindled. The largest single gift was that to the endowment in 1887 by J. A. Bostwick of New York City of securities of the face value of \$50,000. These later increased in value many times. J. L. M. Curry resigned the professorship of Philosophy and English in Richmond College to become in 1881 the agent of the Peabody Fund for Education in the South. The department was divided. William Dandridge Thomas was elected professor of Philosophy and served until his death in 1901. Abram Burwell Brown became professor of English and was succeeded on his death in 1886 by John Pollard (1836-1905), who resigned in 1901.

20. Poe, 90.

21. Annual of Central Committee, 1899, pp. 9, 27.

In 1880 the Sunday School and Bible Board which had been located in Staunton was moved to Petersburg and instructed to give especial attention to colportage. The Board elected as its full time superintendent John Mason Pilcher (1841-1924), pastor in Covington, who served until this Board was consolidated with the State Mission Board in 1908.

The General Association in 1881 appointed S. C. Clopton, J. L. M. Curry, H. H. Harris, W. E. Hatcher and C. H. Ryland a standing committee to secure more active cooperation between it and the district associations and the churches. The committee adopted as its aim a contribution from every church and from every member and prosecuted its work with such vigor that contributions to State, Foreign and Home Missions, Education, Ministers' Relief and the Sunday School and Bible Board increased from \$22,870.69 in 1881 to \$33,963.49 in 1885. Of the 707 churches in Virginia in 1881 only 83 contributed to all six of the Boards. In 1889 contributions reached \$52,213.49. There were 757 churches and 350 of them gave to all the Boards. Only 121 churches gave nothing to any of the objects. In 1898 contributions exceeded \$70,000. Of the 946 churches, reporting a total of 120,798 members, 451 churches contributed to all objects and 108 to none.

Shenandoah Association

In 1882 twelve churches dismissed from the Potomac and one (Luray) from the Shiloh, "west of and immediately adjacent to the Blue Ridge Mountains," formed the Shenandoah Association. T. B. Shepherd was its first president and William C. Bitting, its first clerk.

The Treasurers

George B. Steel (1835-1916), who had discharged for twelve years the duties of treasurer of the General Association and its

agencies, without salary, resigned in 1882 and Norvell Ryland (1842-1900) was elected. He was succeeded in 1897 by B. A. Jacob (1849-1937) who served until 1919 and was followed by F. T. Crump (1867-1951), treasurer for thirty years.

The Virginia Baptist Congress

Following the suggestion by W. R. L. Smith (1845-1935) in the *Religious Herald* and its editorial endorsement, about 300 ministers and laymen met in Lynchburg from February 27 to March 2, 1883, and held the first Congress of Virginia Baptists. J. L. Burrows was elected president. They heard addresses on eleven subjects of current religious interest which were discussed freely from the floor. "It gave such general satisfaction"²² that a second Congress was held in Danville for three days in 1886. The generally accepted and the divergent views on topics of importance having been well ventilated there was no third meeting.

Religious Herald

In 1888 Robert Healey Pitt (1853-1937), pastor of Venable Street Church in Richmond, became associate editor of the *Religious Herald* and later co-editor with A. E. Dickinson. After Dickinson's death in 1906 Pitt became sole editor and proprietor and continued as such to the end of his life. For almost a half century he maintained its traditional standard of balanced constructive leadership.

Intermont College

Through the efforts of Joseph R. Harrison (1832-1901) the Southwest Virginia Institute for young women was opened at Glade Spring in Washington County in 1884. It was moved to Bristol and renamed Virginia Intermont College in 1912.

22. *Second Congress of Virginia Baptists*, 4.

The Orphanage

The initial step toward a Virginia Baptist Orphanage was taken in 1888. Trustees appointed by the General Association selected a location near the town of Salem and the first cottage was ready for occupancy in 1892. George J. Hobday (1847-1926) was superintendent from its beginning until 1905, and Charles L. Corbitt (1866-1934) for nineteen years thereafter.

The Ellysons

The death of Henry K. Ellyson came in 1890. Since 1848, as corresponding secretary of the Board of Managers of the General Association and later of the State Mission Board, he had directed Baptist missionary activities in Virginia. He was followed in office by his son, William Ellyson (1851-1919), who, like his father, served without salary until his death.²³

B.Y.P.U.

Through the initiative of J. Calvin Moss the first convention of the Virginia Baptist Young Peoples' Union was held in 1893 during the meeting of the General Association. Ernest M. Long was president and J. G. Pace, secretary. There were then in the State nine local unions with 816 members. The organization spread rapidly and nine years later there were 202 unions with a membership of 10,745. In 1893 the General Association expressed its pleasure with the movement, its activities within the churches and its instruction of the young people in "Baptist history, polity and methods." The ninth convention of the Baptist Young Peoples' Union of America was held in Richmond in 1899. More than 3,000 persons from all parts of the United States and Canada were in attendance. This gave impetus to its development in Virginia.

23. The other sons were also active laymen. H. Theodore Ellyson (1844-1919) was assistant secretary of the General Association for 43 years and James Taylor Ellyson (1847-1919) was corresponding secretary of the Education Board for 46 years.

Powell River Association

A convention of delegates from nineteen churches in Lee County, that had belonged to the Clinch Valley Association, formed in 1894 the Powell River Association. Its first moderator was Thomas B. Forrester (1849-1931) and the first clerk was J. F. Headen.

Richmond College

The Richmond College School of Law had been established in 1870. It was discontinued in 1882 but in 1890 was permanently re-established on the T. C. Williams foundation by the gift from his family of \$25,000. Roger Gregory (1833-1920) was elected professor and served until 1906. Frederick William Boatwright (1868-1951) became professor of Modern Languages in 1890 and Robert Edwin Gaines (1860-) became professor of Mathematics. The Board of Trustees of Richmond College in 1894 filled the presidency, vacant since 1869, by the election of F. W. Boatwright, who served in that office until he became Chancellor of the University of Richmond in 1947. In 1895 Joseph Rufus Hunter (1865-1951) was brought into the faculty as professor of Chemistry and Samuel Chiles Mitchell (1864-1946) as professor of Latin. From the results of successful financial campaigns "Science Hall" was completed in 1899 as was "Memorial Hall" whose first floor housed the collection of the Virginia Baptist Historical Society. This fulfilled the promise made in the Memorial Campaign of 1873 to erect on the Richmond College campus a memorial to the Baptist Fathers who suffered imprisonment during the struggle for religious liberty in Virginia.

The Negro Baptists

In 1882 there were in Virginia, "so far as reported" 12 associations of Negro Baptists with 578 churches, 371 ordained

ministers and 128,601 members.²⁴ At the meeting of the State Convention that year there were delegates from only 7 associations, 59 churches and 44 "Religious Benevolent Societies and Sunday Schools." The Convention set up a State Mission Board in Petersburg, an Educational Board in Lynchburg, a Bible and Publication Board in Norfolk and a Foreign Mission Board in Richmond. In its "Christian salutations" to the General Association in 1884 the Convention reported that it had raised during that year \$4,116 for Missions and Education, was supporting five missionaries in Virginia and was helping to support five in Africa.²⁵ The work of the Educational Board was carried on through the Richmond Theological Seminary and Hartshorn Memorial College for Women, in cooperation with the American Baptist Home Mission Society, which owned and controlled these institutions. In 1886 on the initiative of Philip Morris, chairman of the Educational Board and pastor in Lynchburg, friends in that city donated a site for a school to be controlled solely by the Convention. This developed into the Virginia Baptist Theological Seminary and College, which opened its doors in 1890 with Morris as its first president and produced a controversy that divided the Convention. This came to a climax in May, 1899, when a majority of the 700 delegates present voted to sever all relations with white groups in missionary and educational work.

Members of the minority met in June in the First African Church in Richmond and organized the "Baptist General Association of Virginia, Colored," which cooperated with the American Baptist Home Mission Society in support of Virginia Union University in Richmond. It set up its own Woman's and Sunday School organizations, and Mission, Educational and Publishing Boards. There were present at its meeting in 1923 representatives from 17 district associations and 162

24. Minutes Baptist State Convention, 1883, p. 29.

25. Minutes of General Association, 1884, p. 21.

churches. Virginia Union reported property valued at half a million dollars and 466 students in attendance. Hartshorn had property worth \$200,000 and 263 students. The Association fostered seven academies in different parts of the State. For ten years W. T. Johnson had been editor and manager of the Baptist *Headlight*, the monthly organ of the Association and its auxiliaries. In 1923 a total of \$2,582.27 was given by 111 churches to objects promoted by the Association. In addition the Woman's Baptist Missionary and Educational Association contributed for Education, \$2,309; for State Missions, \$324.80 and for Foreign Missions, \$160.50. Virginia's gifts to the Lott Carey Convention amounted to \$6,467.30.

The Virginia Baptist State Convention adopted as its motto:

Faith in Self, Self Help, Negro Control of Negro Institutions,
Negroes Only Safe and Efficient Teachers for Negroes.

When it met in 1921 there were affiliated with it 20 district associations and 259 churches, having 198,000 members. Forty-one other churches were received into membership. During the year the Convention had received for all purposes \$27,993.03 of which \$22,451.71 was for the Seminary and College at Lynchburg and \$2,442.51 for Foreign Missions. The Woman's State Educational Convention had raised \$5,666.50 for the Seminary and sent \$418.60 to the National Convention. The Seminary and College reported property valued at \$450,000 and a student body of 550. R. C. Woods was president.

Multiplied Activities 1900-1926

IN 1900 there were in cooperation with the General Association 952 churches with 122,455 members. They were pastored by 584 ministers and contributed \$374,405.59 to local purposes and \$84,822.21 to the causes fostered by the Association. There were 870 Sunday schools reporting 67,193 pupils.

In 1901 contributions to missions and benevolences reached \$92,706.78. In 1903 they went over \$100,000; in 1910 they were \$177,480.07; in 1912, over \$200,000 and in 1914, \$236,747.23.

To Foreign Fields

During this period appointees by the Foreign Mission Board from Virginia were:

To Africa—W. M. Perry (1902), Dr. George Green and Mrs. Green (Lydia Williams) (1906), George W. Sadler (1914) and Miss Ruth Kersey (1920).

To Argentina—Joseph L. Hart (1903), Sidney M. Sowell (1903), James C. Quarles (1908), L. C. Quarles (1910), Mrs. L. C. Quarles (Jennie Saunders) (1919), Thomas B. Hawkins (1921) and Mrs. A. R. Phillips (Ruth Cook) (1921).

To Brazil—Ernest A. Jackson and Mrs. Jackson (Janette Beasley) (1903), Mrs. T. C. Bagby (Frances Adams) (1918), Asa R. Crabtree and Mrs. Crabtree (Mabel Henderson) (1921) and Mrs. J. A. Tumblin (Morrow Davis) (1922).

To China—S. T. Williams (1900), Mrs. R. E. Chambers (Julia Trainham) (1901), Mrs. W. B. Glass (Jessie Pettigrew) (1901), Miss Lettie Spainhour (later Mrs. P. W. Hamlett) (1901), Charles G. McDaniel and Mrs. McDaniel (Nannie Bartlett) (1902), Mrs. B. P. Roach (Laureola Lloyd) (1904), Dr. A. D. Louthan (1905), Peter W. Hamlett (1907), Mrs. J. M. Gaston (Annie Gay) (1908), Miss Elsie Gilliam (1910), Mrs. G. P. Bostick (Lena Stover) (1912), Mrs. R. V. Taylor (Anne Sampson) (1912), Miss Olive Bagby (1914), Miss Margie Shumate (1914), A. W. Yocum (1914), E. M. Louthan and Mrs. Louthan (Gertrude Richards) (1915), Miss Olive Riddell (1919), Mrs. D. F. Stamps (Elizabeth Belk) (1920), Mrs. W. B. Johnson (Kate Carper) (1921), Miss Carrie E. Owen (1921), Miss Ida Paterson (later Mrs. Harold Storm) (1921), J. Hundley Wiley and Mrs. Wiley (Elizabeth Ellyson) (1921), Mrs. Edward Bostick (Nell Lawrence) (1923), Miss Nell Putney (1923), Mrs. Harold Snuggs (Grace Mason) (1923), Miss Ola Lea (1925) and Mrs. C. H. Westbrook (Louise Ellyson) (1925).

To Italy—C. J. F. Anderson (1900), Mrs. D. G. Whittinghill (Susie Taylor) (1905) and J. P. Stuart (1908).

To Japan—Calder T. Willingham and Mrs. Willingham (Bessie Hardy) (1902), J. H. Rowe (1906) and John Moncure (1909).

To Mexico—Mrs. J. E. Davis (Mary Gamble) (1904).

Richmond College • The Education Commission
Westhampton College • The Schools

In 1902 Richmond College concluded a successful canvass of the churches which oversubscribed \$75,000 to meet the conditional gift of \$25,000 by the American Baptist Education

Society¹—the whole \$100,000 to be an addition to the endowment. The General Association in 1903 set up the Baptist Education Commission to bring into coordination the schools under Baptist control, to assist in payment of debts, to vest in the denomination through their boards of trustees the legal title to their property and to plan for a central college “for the highest education of women.” R. H. Pitt was president of the Commission. B. Cabell Hening, its corresponding secretary, was followed in 1912 by John W. Cammack. In 1907, the Commission and Richmond College launched jointly a campaign for \$350,000 to meet \$150,000 from the General Education Board for the endowment of the “Greater Richmond College and the Woman’s College.” In 1910 there were acquired 286 acres west of Richmond for adjoining but separate sites for Richmond College and Westhampton College. Building operations began in 1912 and in 1914 the colleges occupied their new quarters.

Chatham Training School² for boys, established in 1909 under local auspices, was received under the care of the Education Commission in 1911. In 1914, Fork Union Military Academy, which had been founded by W. E. Hatcher, came under its control. Bluefield College, a junior college for boys, was opened in 1922 with R. A. Lansdell as its president.

The corporate name of the group of schools organized under the charter of Richmond College was changed in 1920 to “University of Richmond.” Under one president, Richmond College, Westhampton College and the T. C. Williams Law School continued to have separate deans, faculties, student bodies and buildings, while the property was held, common facilities afforded and degrees awarded by the trustees of the University.

1. John D. Rockefeller’s disbursing agency prior to the organization of the General Education Board.

2. Its name was changed in 1925 to Hargrave Military Academy to honor its chief benefactor, J. Hunt Hargrave.

Summer Encampments

In 1908 a committee of the General Association held at Buckroe Beach the first Virginia Baptist Summer Encampment. This was taken over by the Baptist Young Peoples' Union under the direction of Joseph T. Watts, who became Sunday School Secretary of the State Mission Board in 1909, and in 1914 the Inter mont Chautauqua at Bristol was inaugurated under the same management.

The Laymen's Missionary Movement was organized among Virginia Baptists in 1908 by a committee of which Livius Lankford was chairman and Lewis Boshier, secretary.

In 1920 Robert D. Garland (1855-1930) who had served for 16 years as Field Secretary, was elected Corresponding Secretary of the State Mission Board. The next year the separate boards for Education, State Missions, Foreign Missions, Home Missions and the Education Commission of the General Association were merged in the single Board of Missions and Education. R. D. Garland became its Secretary of Missions; J. T. Watts, Secretary for Sunday Schools, Colportage and the Baptist Young Peoples' Union; and J. W. Cammack, Secretary of Education.

The Virginia Baptist Foundation was formed in 1922 as an agency to receive and administer gifts by wills to "the Baptist Cause." W. M. Rucker was its first president.

Social Problems

An aroused social conscience found expression in resolutions by district associations and by the General Association, petitioning the Legislature in 1902 to restrict granting licenses to sell liquor; cordially sympathizing in 1903 with the State's establishing a school for deaf, dumb and blind colored children; in 1904, condemning lynching and urging cooperation with the Virginia Anti-Saloon League; and approving in 1909 and 1912

the establishment by the State of "Homes" for incorrigible white and colored girls. In 1913 the General Association appointed a standing Social Service Commission to report annually, expressed approval of President Woodrow Wilson's course in maintaining peace with Mexico and favored enactment of legislation to restrict marriage to those mentally and physically fit. In 1914 it rejoiced in the majority of 30,365 votes in favor of statewide prohibition.

New District Associations

In 1902 delegates from thirteen churches in Caroline and adjacent counties organized the Hermon Association. E. C. Moncure was its first moderator and W. W. Gresham its first clerk. In 1903 twenty-five churches in Amherst and Nelson, dismissed by the Albemarle Association, held the first meeting of the Piedmont Association. J. W. Martin (1848-1911) was moderator and M. J. Webb, clerk. The same year the Dover dismissed nineteen churches between the York and the James Rivers to form the Peninsula Association. Maryus Jones was moderator and R. A. Folkes (1845-1932) was secretary. In 1906 the Portsmouth Association granted letters to twenty-one churches in its Upper District and to twenty-six churches in its Middle District. They formed the next year the Petersburg Association with W. B. Daniel, president and Hugh Cox Smith (1854-1931), secretary, and the Blackwater Association with A. M. Gardner, moderator and Gavin Rawls, its first clerk and treasurer.

Woman's Missionary Union

In the twelve years following the reorganization of the Woman's Missionary Union in 1899 Mrs. J. A. Barker had been followed in its presidency by Mrs. Thomas P. Bagby in 1905-6, Mrs. George W. McDaniel in 1907-8 and Mrs. W. C. James in 1909-10. Young Woman's Auxiliaries were organized

in 1902 and Girls' Auxiliaries in 1913. The "Season of Prayer for State Missions" was begun in 1902 and support of its first State Missionary, W. A. Hash in Buchanan County, was undertaken in 1905. In 1906 Mrs. Julian P. Thomas became the Union's first full time salaried corresponding secretary. In 1907 the organization of "Mission Study" classes was urged on the local societies and chapters of Royal Ambassadors had been started for boys who had outgrown the Sunbeam Bands. The Woman's Missionary Union completed the first building for the Buchanan Mountain Mission School, a joint project with the State Mission Board, and in 1911 Robert A. and Helen Henderson took charge of its operation.

The Million Dollar Campaign

Despite the distractions and the additional demands of World War I, Virginia Baptists had not permitted their work to stagnate. Beginning the same month (April, 1917) as America's entry into the war, a canvass was made of the churches for their participation in raising a fund of a million dollars for increased endowment, for buildings and for scholarships for Richmond and Westhampton Colleges.

75 Million Campaign

In 1919 Virginia assumed responsibility for pledges for 7 million dollars of the 75 million that the Southern Baptist Convention had set as its goal for missions, benevolencies and education in the next five years. Under the leadership of George W. McDaniel (1875-1927), pastor of the First Baptist Church of Richmond, 1905-27, pledges of \$8,100,000 were secured in the State.

The Hospital

After several years of consideration by the General Association, trustees were appointed and a site was acquired in Lynch-

burg for the Virginia Baptist Hospital. In 1920 construction was begun.

Opposition to the Functioning by the State in Matters of Religion

With the approval of the executive head of the State Board of Charities and Corrections a bill was introduced in the General Assembly in 1920 to create a religious chaplaincy in the State prison. This was to be filled by an appointee of the State who would be paid from the State treasury. Baptists recognized this commission and support by the State of a teacher of religion as a violation of their historic principle that the State has nothing to do with matters of religion. After the bill had been defeated by their opposition, the Baptists suggested a conference with representatives of other denominations at which they adopted a cooperative arrangement for conducting and financing religious work in the penal institutions of the State. The State Mission Board cordially approved the plan and each year has made an appropriation for its operation.³

Centennial of the General Association

In November 1923 messengers numbering 1,458, from churches in twenty-eight district associations, gathered in Richmond to celebrate the centennial of the General Association, the agency through which most of the achievements of Virginia Baptists had been implemented for a century. The business sessions of the meeting, which lasted five days, were held in the Second Baptist Church—the mass meetings in the City Auditorium and at the University of Richmond.

Affiliated with the General Association were 1,160 churches, 634 ministers and 209,680 members. There were 1,090 Sunday

3. For an account of its origin see *Religious Herald*, June 26, 1930, pp. 3, 10. It was chartered in 1942 as the Interdenominational Religious Work Foundation, Inc.

schools, which enrolled 178,157 pupils. Contributions for the year for the financial support of the home churches came to \$2,115,701 and for missions and benevolences were \$1,021,880. In total gifts through the agencies of the Southern Baptist Convention for the preceding four years Virginia led all the states.⁴ The Association was already helping to plan for a cooperative program to follow the 75 Million Campaign. In her report for the Virginia Woman's Missionary Union Miss Lizzie Savage, corresponding secretary from 1921 to 1924, stated there were in Virginia 992 Woman's Missionary Societies, 345 Young Woman's Auxiliaries, 394 Girls' Auxiliaries, 811 chapters of Royal Ambassadors and 727 Sunbeam Bands. Mission Study classes had increased in ten years from 100 to 1,924 and gifts from \$61,448.49 to \$341,669.78.⁵ The 820 Baptist Young Peoples' Unions, 100 constituted that year, had 330,000 members.

The trustees of the University of Richmond reported an enrollment of 1,004 students and a graduating class the preceding June of 118—both the largest in its history. The invested endowment had reached \$1,762,139.61 and the estimated value of grounds, buildings and equipment was \$1,717,679.42. Three junior colleges, Averett, Virginia Intermont and Bluefield; three academies, Oak Hill, Chatham Training School and Fork Union; and three mission schools, Buchanan, Blue Ridge and Piedmont, were controlled by trustees nominated by the General Association or directly by the Board of Missions and Education.⁶ Their total property was valued at \$1,831,000.

At the night sessions the Association turned aside from hearing reports and transacting business and learned of its history, its century of accomplishments and tasks that lay ahead. The *Mirror of History*, a pageant portraying events in the experi-

4. Virginia Baptist Annual, 1923, back of cover.

5. The presidents during this period were Miss Lizzie Savage in 1912-13, Mrs. W. C. James in 1914-15, Mrs. J. F. Vines in 1916-20, Mrs. H. B. Cross in 1921-22, and Mrs. C. W. McElroy, 1923-4, Mrs. G. R. Martin, 1925-28. Miss Blanche Sydnor White was corresponding secretary, 1925-49.

6. For charters see 1922 Annual, pp. 219-237.

ences of the early Baptists in Virginia, sponsored by the Woman's Missionary Union and written by Ruby Buxton of Newport News, was presented by University of Richmond students to an overflowing audience. It was followed throughout the week by a series of informative addresses.

Compulsory Bible Reading in Public Schools

Again Virginia Baptists were called to affirm before the Legislature their opposition to the assumption of authority and the exercise of compulsion by the State in matters of religion. In 1924 a bill, giving school boards authority to compel the daily reading of a portion of the Scriptures in the public schools under their care, passed the House of Delegates on its "pious appearance." It almost slipped through the Senate before public attention was attracted to its violation of the fundamental principle that the State cannot administer in religion. The group of eight secret fraternal orders that backed the bill, encouraged by the number of states that had passed similar laws and by their near success in Virginia, announced that the passage of such a measure would be pushed at the next session of the Assembly.

At its meeting in July, 1925, the Dover Association resolved unanimously that:

Whereas, there is an effort being made to induce the next Legislature of Virginia to pass an act requiring the *compulsory* reading of the Bible in every public school; and, whereas, the Bible is primarily a book of religion and as such its use should be left to the individual conscience free from legislative compulsion, and the duty of teaching it is a function of the home and the churches and not of the State; therefore, the Dover Association reaffirms the historic opposition of Virginia Baptists to any meddling by the State in matters concerning religion and respectfully protests to the General Assembly against the passage of any such laws on the ground that it would be an improper interference by the State in the realm of religion and a violation of the principles of religious liberty and of the complete separation of

the spheres of Church and State, as embodied in the Constitution of the Commonwealth.

Seventeen district associations responded to the call of the Dover for similar action. So did the General Association at its meeting in November when R. H. Pitt, at the request of the Virginia Baptist Historical Society, presented an address on "Soul Liberty—Some of the Implications." In it he discussed the age-long struggle for the separation of Church and State and voiced the objections to the State's compelling the reading of the Bible in tax supported schools.⁷ This was given wide publicity by the secular papers. The Association appointed a large committee to prepare and present to the General Assembly at its next session a Memorial against the proposed law.⁸ This was drawn by John Garland Pollard,⁹ a member of the committee. The Memorial¹⁰ with the resolutions of the district associations were presented at a large public meeting of a committee of the Senate by George W. McDaniel, who stated clearly and forcibly the position of the Baptists. The committee by indefinite postponement killed the bill.¹¹

7. In full in the *Religious Herald*, November 19, 1925. Printed as a pamphlet by the Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, Nashville, Tennessee.

8. The bill as offered in the State Senate in 1926 compelled the reading of five verses of the King James version of the Bible "at the opening of every public school on every school day by each teacher in charge" and prescribed "such discipline by the district Board of Education for failure to do so as may be necessary to bring about the performance."

9. Pollard was governor of Virginia, 1930-33.

10. The Memorial is given in full in the *Religious Herald*, February 18, 1926.

11. *Religious Herald*, March 4, 1926.

THE VIRGINIA BAPTIST

Temper and Tradition

by R. H. PITT

*An Address before the Baptist General Association of Virginia
at its Centennial in 1923¹*

THERE is a Virginia Baptist temper. Its characteristic qualities are by no means confined to Virginia, but there is ground for believing that they are found in our denominational history in larger measure, and are maintained with greater steadfastness than elsewhere. We may not be able to define it with complete accuracy, but we recognize it and rejoice in it.

It is a tradition of courage: a quiet, faithful, fearless advocacy and defense of truths and principles which they have held to be precious. In those earlier heroic days, when our brethren suffered as well as labored, there was no whining, nor complaining. Their protests against injustice and their pleas for liberty were always sober, clear, restrained. One fails to find any intimation that the men who languished in jails or suffered other punishments ever sought to capitalize them. When they were released they went on their way praising God and preaching the gospel of good will. The great body of our people and their leaders have feared God and have feared no one else.

Virginia Baptists have from the beginning cherished and cultivated a denominational consciousness. Theirs is a tradition of denominational self-respect. Even when our folk had to

1. From *Religious Herald*, November 15, 1923.

fight for elemental rights they went about it in an orderly way. They have been glad to enjoy the confidence and respect of the whole community, particularly of Christians of other names and communions. They have claimed no superiority in rank over their brethren, but have never been willing to acknowledge any inferiority on their own part. They have not allowed their denominational self-esteem to run into arrogance, or to degenerate into intolerance.

A thoughtful Christian courtesy has marked the attitude of our brethren throughout their relations to one another. Our strong men, and there have been many of them, have often differed, sometimes seriously and sharply, about doctrine and duty. Seldom have they allowed their zealous support of their own views to lead them to forget that the queen of all Christian graces is love. It has been found possible to maintain firmly, to promote steadily, and to press earnestly the great truths of evangelical religion without sacrificing Christlikeness of temper. The atmosphere of this State, so far as our brotherhood is concerned, has never been favorable to the development of doctrinal martinets who demand that we shall all pass in review before them. Even in our own day of doctrinal turmoil our people are thoughtful and considerate, claiming for themselves a reasonable personal freedom and freely granting to others what they ask for themselves. We cannot forbear to express the earnest hope that this quality, with its implications of justice, liberty, forbearance and kindness, may never disappear.

A word may be added concerning the cooperative disposition of our people. In their earliest history their individualism was stressed. They were jealous of their personal rights and liberties and looked upon any common organization as a possible encroachment on their personal privileges. Yet, the Christian instinct for fellowship and the recognition of common tasks was buoyant and insubmergible. At length they found a way, and having found it they have walked in it.

The Virginia Baptist tradition is one of constancy. A sobriety and steadiness, a loyalty to their brethren and to their own ideals, may surely be found in the history of the Baptists of our State. Our people have not always been swift, but usually they have been sure.

Brethren from newer communities than ours would doubtless insist that conservatism is an outstanding feature of our Virginia Baptist life and polity. We would not deny the impeachment if by conservatism is meant the disposition to be taught by experience to be judicious in launching out on uncharted seas. Yet the spirit of adventure has never been lacking in our history. Doctrinal fads and novelties have little vogue among us but we remember that the ancient Word which bids us stand in the old paths also bids us walk.

Courage, denominational consciousness, courtesy, considerateness, cooperation, constancy, conservatism. Something is yet lacking. No body of people, certainly no Christian brotherhood, can command our respect if it has not somewhere in its spirit the outward and upward look. The student of our history and life finds running through it a masterful purpose, a temper of conquest. All the records of the long, varied, troubled, joyful years; all that our brethren have achieved under the blessing of God, furnish the point of vantage from which if we are not unworthy of our sires, we shall go on to larger things, to nobler tasks and more enduring achievements.

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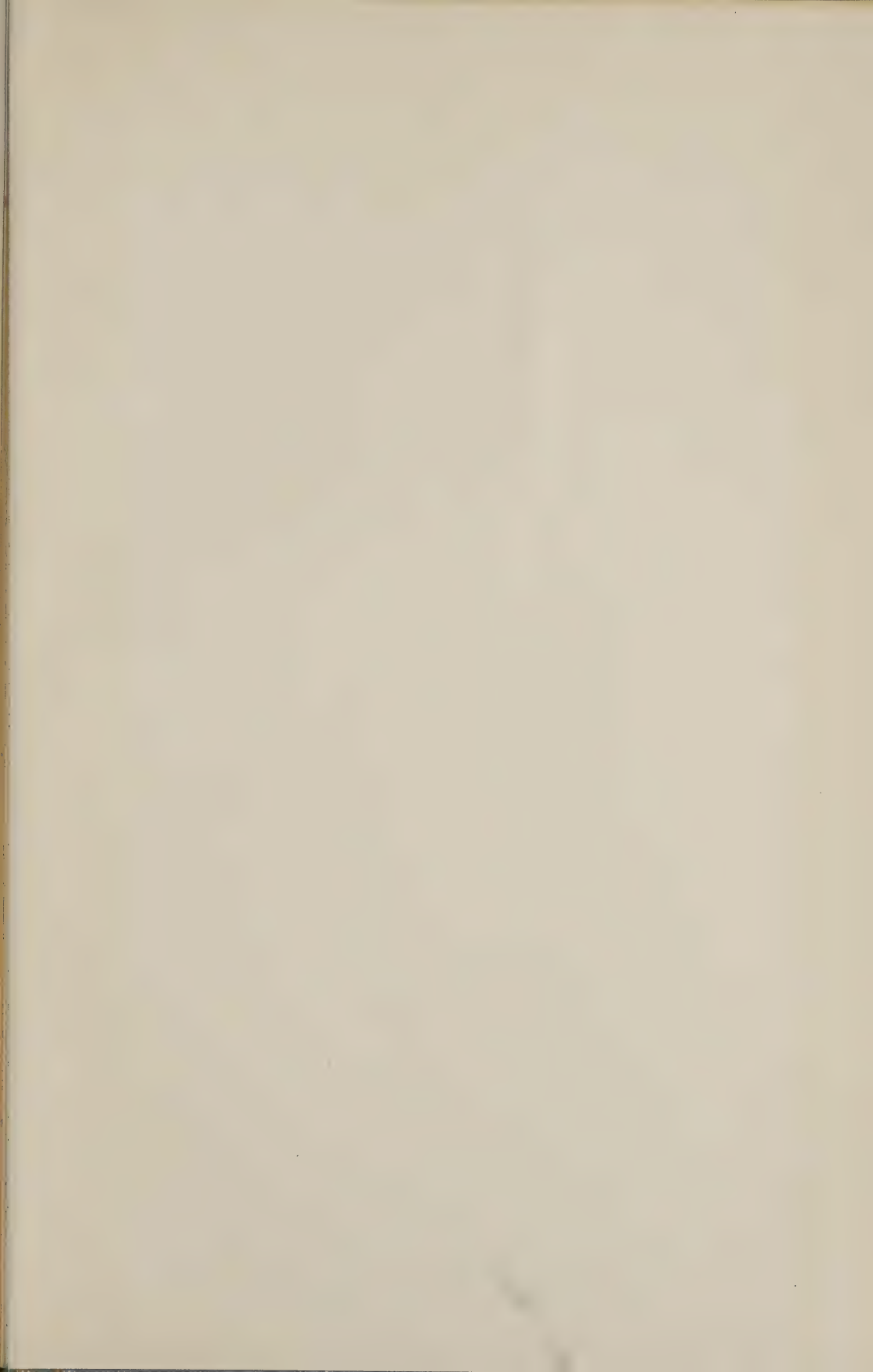
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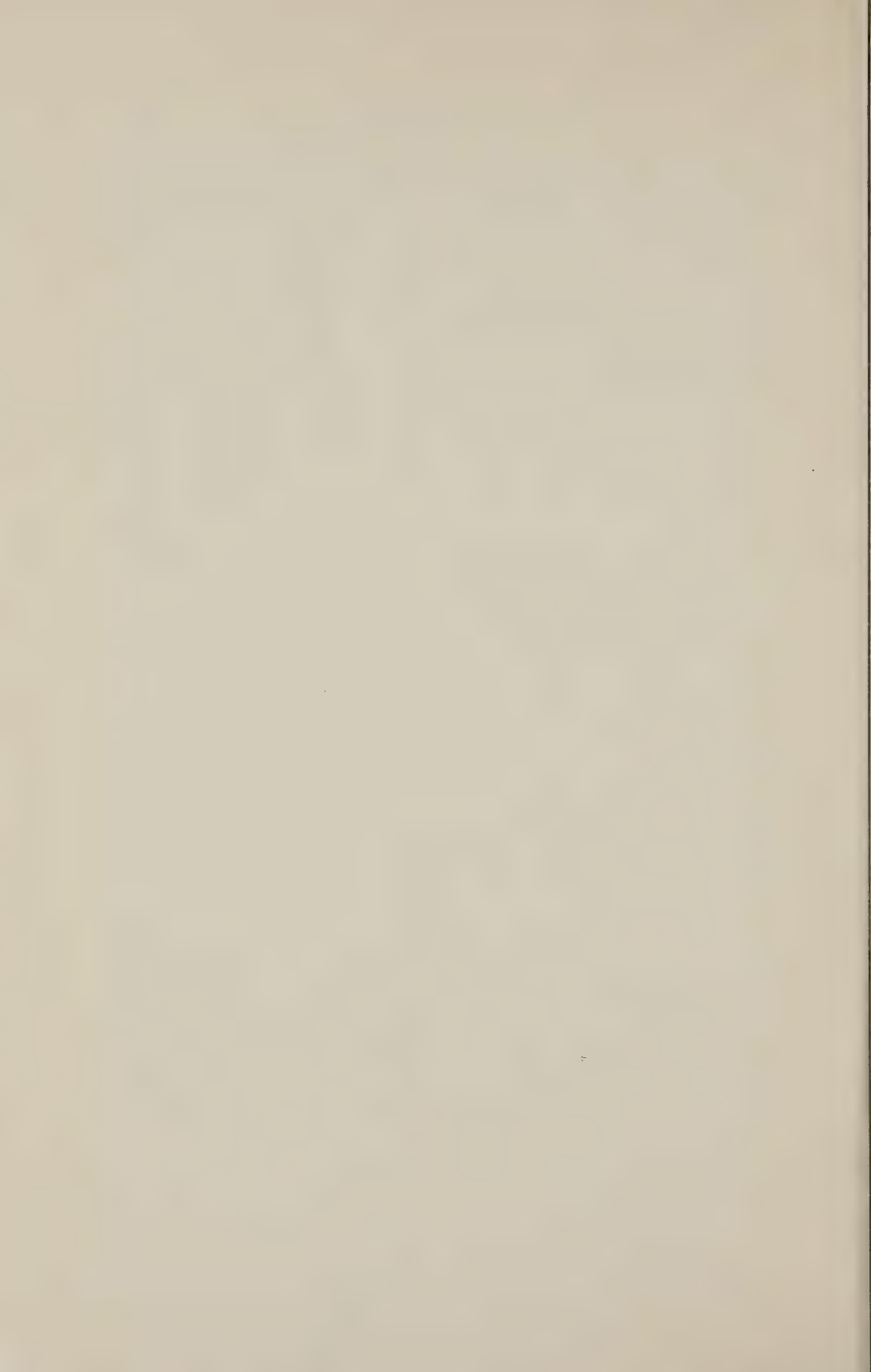
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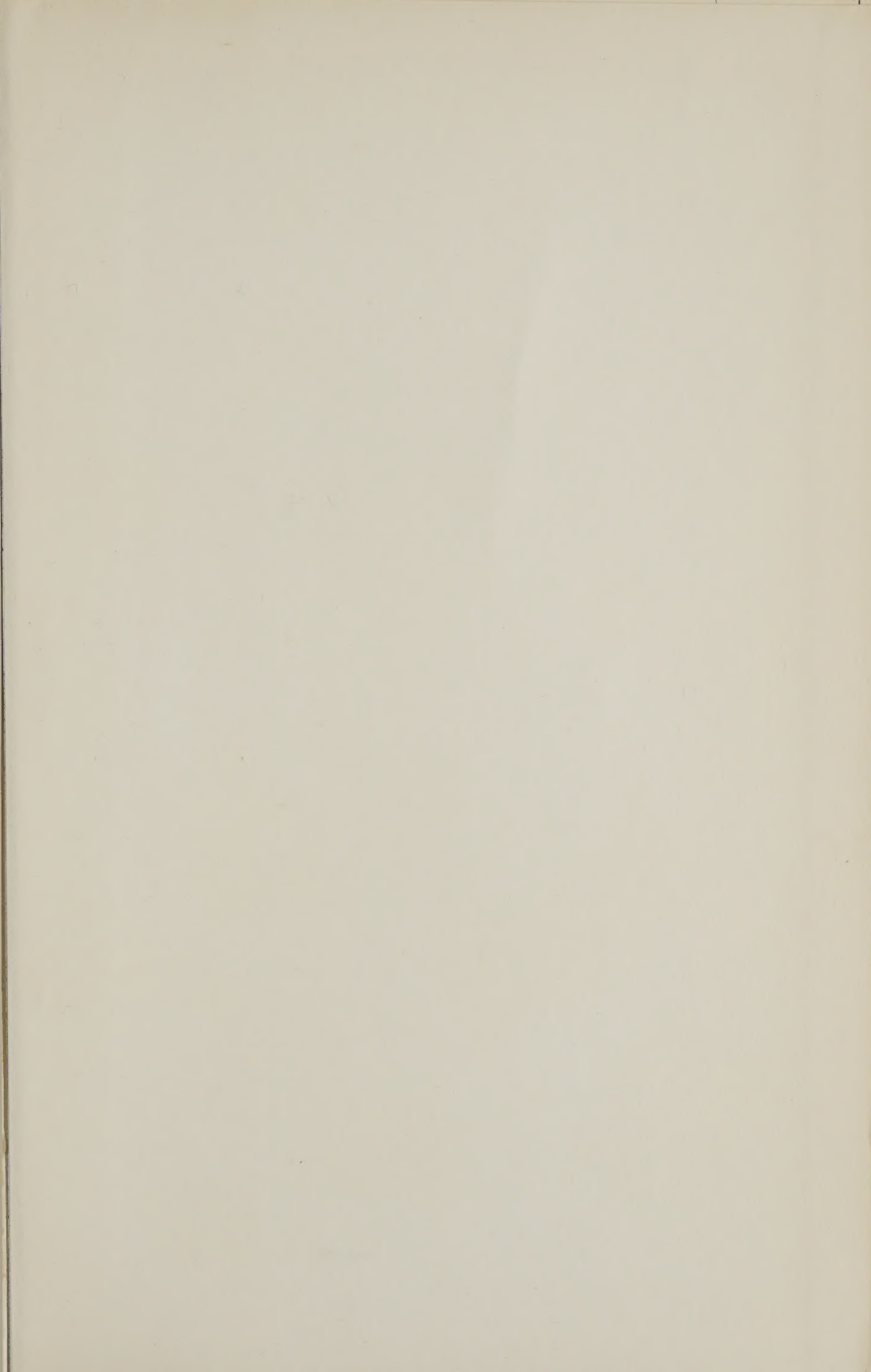
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A MAP OF THE INTERNAL IMPROVEMENTS OF VIRGINIA

PENNSYLVANIA

Prepared by C. CROZET, late Principal Engineer of Va

Under a resolution of the General Assembly

ADOPTED MARCH 15th 1848.

Entered according to the Act of Congress in the year 1848, by Charles Crozet, in the Clerk's office of the United States in and for the Eastern District of Virginia.

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